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COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

VOLUME IV WINTER 1952 NUMBER 1

THE MOZARABIC LYRIC AND THEODOR FRINGS' THEORIES

LEO SPITZER

IN HIS lecture "Minnesinger und Troubadours"[1] Theodor Frings, the famous linguistic geographer turned literary historian of no less intuition, attempts a daring return to what might be called supergeographic Herderian ideas about *Naturpoesie,* as he had done once before, in 1939, for *europäische Heldendichtung.* In this lecture he revives more specifically Herder's and the romantics' idea of the popular origin of Minnesang and troubadour poetry.

After having taken into account all that has been suggested concerning the development of these mediaeval poetic schools and having pondered the various theories (the classical Latin, the middle Latin [the *Vagantes!*], the liturgical, the Arabic), Frings asserts that no one reading with a fresh mind a Middle High German poem such as Walther von der Vogelweide's *Unter der linden* (*ca.* 1200) or the Provençal poem of Marcabrun, *A la fontana del vergier* (*ca.* 1150), can fail to be struck by the fact that the learned sources hitherto suggested by comparative literary scholarship do not fully account for the living poetic products. "Uns ist, als habe man über der Ahnenforschung das lebende und lebendige Kind vergessen." To Frings these specimens of courtly poetry are only learned re-elaborations of original *Frauenlieder* which spring from timeless, universal, lyrical folk themes. In the poem of Walther, he points out, we hear a primeval "Glückslaut ... im Munde des plaudernden sich erinnernden Mädchens, aber von

[1] *Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vorträge und Schriften,* fasc. 34 (Berlin, 1949).

einem Mann, dem Dichter, hineingelegt"; in the relatively much more sophisticated poem of Marcabrun we have also a primitive "Mädchenklage und Begegnung mit dem Tröster in der freien Natur."

Frings then proceeds to follow the traces of the popular *Frauenlied* through the literatures not only of mediaeval Portugal (the *cantigas de amigo* of the Portuguese *cancioneiros, ca.* 1200, which preserve best the primordial character of this genre—cf. the refrain *lelia douro* with the *tandaradai* of Walther), France (the *chansons de toile* of the 12th-13th cent.[2]), Provence (where the *alba* and the *pastorela* are narrative-dramatic re-elaborations of *Frauenlieder*), and Germany (the anonymous *Frauenstrophen* of *Minnesangs Frühling, ca.* 1150, to which the *Männerstrophen* are secondary foils), but also of Scandinavia, Russia, Serbia, China, Egypt (3rd-2nd millennium B.C.), and ancient Greece (Sappho). Troubadour and Minnesang poetry, Frings holds, does not consist then merely of "echoes" of scholarly traditions (the kind of poetry with which modern scholars in literary history instinctively sympathize); they are products of basically popular imagination, contaminated, it is true, by courtly and learned influences (obviously, Minnesang has remained more faithful to the original motif than has troubadour poetry). Our two sample poems show, in different dosages of the popular and the learned, an "Aufstieg aus volkstümlicher Kleinkunst" (a process evidentally diametrically opposed to what Naumann found predominant in popular poetry and folklore: "gesunkenes Kulturgut"). Frings concludes his treatise with the following statement: "Gelehrte Forschung entliess uns vielfach in der Bedrückung, als ob alles nur ein Echo sei. Wir haben versucht, unserer ältesten Liebesdichtung den vollen Ton zurückzugeben in den Stimmen der Völker in Liedern."

With this Herderian reminiscence Frings has reaffirmed the basic correctness of the views of the now generally depreciated romantic school of scholars (A. W. Schlegel, Uhland, Jakob Grimm, and their pupils, W. Scherer, Jeanroy, G. Paris). The popular origin of lyrical poetry, Frings teaches us, must be kept distinct from later learned incrustations or infiltrations (*Durchschichtung*). It was to be expected that only a linguist such as Frings, familiar with the ways of popular speech, could bring to mediaeval literary studies something of that *vergeistigtes Naturburschentum* which was so characteristic of a Jakob Grimm (in his literary as well as his linguistic works) and which is

[2] For a different treatment of the *chanson de toile*, see E. Faral, *Romania*, LXIX, 434 seq. But even if this subgenre should be, as Faral suggests, a later coinage of sophisticated, archaic poets of the 13th cent., who imagined princesses of ancient times sitting at the windows of their manors and singing licentious love songs while embroidering or sewing, the basic motif of the maiden freeing herself from the tutelage of her mother in order to give herself freely to her lover harks back to primitive *Frauenlieder*.

almost entirely missing in recent mediaeval literary studies, from Bédier, Lucien Foulet, and Faral to Ernst Robert Curtius. For the popular basis of our cultural languages can never be denied—it is the *mots populares*, not the *mots savants*,[3] that represent their basic texture. And only a modern linguistic geographer has the authority to vindicate Herder's intuitive idea that *Naturpoesie* transcends geography and is a primordial gift with which all of humanity, at all times and places, is congenitally endowed.

It was to be expected that the literary historians of today whom Frings implicitly attacks would not accept such new-old ideas without strong reservations. Professor E. Auerbach (*Romance Philology*, IV, 65 ff.) gives expression to his reservations when called upon to review, along with Frings' 60-page sketch, the bulky volume of E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, a powerful compilation of "antiromantic" investigations into the learned sources, "echoes," *topoi*, of mediaeval poetry.[4] Auerbach in his unenthusiastically cool, quietly caustic way seems to smile at the naïveté of Frings' neoromantic ideas, at the "sentimental and idyllic style" of a certain quotation from W. Scherer and of Frings' own writing. He expresses the traditional doubts as to a supposed creation *ex nihilo* ascribed to the so-called popular mind; indeed he doubts the actual existence in the Middle Ages of the popular mind supposedly discovered by Herder, pointing out that, while it may be true of the eighteenth century that a sharp distinction existed between the cultured minority (the reading public) and the mass of the people, such a distinction did not prevail in the Middle Ages when populace and poets were in constant close intercourse.

I confess that I cannot quite understand the latter argument. Was not the chasm between the learned and the popular mind deeper in the Middle Ages than in the (pre)romantic and even in our own period? The *clerc* writing in Latin as opposed to the minstrel composing in the

[3] This statement does not, of course, imply that the study of the *mots savants* should be neglected, as has been too often the case in the past (cf. the introduction to my *Essays in Historical Semantics*), nor that transitional stages between *mots savants* and *mots populaires* did not exist.

[4] Curtius' views represent the last (and necessarily one-sided) development in a chain of positivistic thought typified by Lucien Foulet's famous sentence: "Le Roman de Renart sort des livres" (as opposed to the romantic position of a Sudre: "Le Roman de Renart sort des foules"). It is to be feared that the current confusion between a book's size and its importance will make the public ten times more inclined to believe in the validity of Curtius' book of 600 pages than in Frings' pamphlet of 60. Needless to say, the now fashionable antipopular trend in philological circles reflects more the sociological situation of the 20th-cent. scholar, his resentful estrangement from the common people, and his jealous defense of a social position which he feels to be already jeopardized, than the truth about mediaeval poetry. A bookish intelligentsia is hardly capable of respect for the simple, naive genius of the folk or for the improvisational, oral, and vocal in song.

vernacular—and even in poetry written in the vernacular, the opposition of genres such as *mester de clerecía* and *mester de juglaría*—the bilingual *albo*, the *épitres farcies*—the serious macaronic poetry of the Middle Ages in English and Romance languages, the opposition mentioned above of *mots savants* and *mots populaires*—these are so many clear manifestations of a rift unknown to our civilization, in which even learned technical terms of the sciences are popular. Auerbach doubts the authenticity of the finds of the preromantics because these writers were motivated by their own cultural needs (the opposition to French neoclassicism and to the well-bred society of their day) which brought them to lean toward the popular genius. But could they not still, in spite of or perhaps because of their specific motivations, have discovered an actually existing historical feature of mediaeval poetry for which neoclassical writers would not have had an organ? Similarly, it could be said, Nietzsche was probably brought to the discovery of the Dionysiac element in Greek poetry by his own temperamental needs—nevertheless, the Dionysiac element in Greece is a historic reality. The motive of the discoverer does not detract from the authenticity of his discovery. America was discovered by a man who was searching for the Indies.

The present article is intended to familiarize students of mediaeval vernacular poetry with a recent sensational discovery of a modest corpus of mediaeval Spanish lyrical poetry, much older than the Romance poetic documents that Frings had at his disposal (and probably unknown also to his reviewer Auerbach), which may well serve to corroborate Frings' theory that in Romance as well as elsewhere the origin of lyricism must be sought in popular *Frauenlieder*, nay in *Frauenstrophen*. This report, mainly but not exclusively reproductive in nature, will, I hope, better enable mediaevalists to see troubadour poetry and Minnesang within the international framework of lyric poetry suggested by Frings.

As early as 1894 the famous Spanish *polígrafo* Menéndez y Pelayo had offered two samples (fantastically adulterated) of old Spanish poetic lines inserted into Hebrew poems by Juda (Ha-) Levi, whom he proclaimed to be "the first Castilian poet whose name is known to us (who would have thought that?)." A half century later (in 1946) a group of Spanish Hebraists[5] began to edit and elucidate, according

[5] The following is a succinct bibliography of the studies dealing with the deciphering and interpretation of the Old Spanish poems in question: S. M. Stern, "Les Vers finaux en espagnol dans les muwassahas hispano-hébraïques," *Al-Andalus*, XIII (1948), 299-346. Francisco Cantera, "Versos españoles en las muwasahas hispano-hebreas," *Sefarad*, IX (1949), 197-234. E. García Gómez, "Mas sobre las jarchas romances en muwassahas hebreas," *Al-Andalus*, XIV (1949), 409-417; "Nuevas observaciones sobre las jarchas romances en muwassahas hebreas," *Al-Andalus*, XV (1950), 158-177; "El apasionante cancionerillo mozárabe," *Clavileño*, May-June 1950, pp. 17-21.

to serious philological method, twenty-one short Old Spanish poems originating in the same Judeo-Mozarabic poetic school, among Jewish poets who lived under Moslem domination in Andalusia (Toledo, Granada, Seville, etc.). Juda Levi (born 1070-75) was the author of eleven of these poems; Moses ibn Ezra (born 1055-60)[6] contributed two; the oldest of the compositions is by a certain Joseph the Scribe, praising a personage who died in 1042 (according to S. M. Stern), thus antedating by a full century the oldest Spanish poetic text hitherto known, the *Poema de Myo Cid*. The most recent of these poems are the work of a certain Todros Abuláfia (Abu-l-afia) who was born as late as 1217 and who, imitating the earlier poems of the same group, wrote in a language remarkably archaic for the thirteenth century. All twenty-one poems[7] are composed in the Mozarabic-Andalusian variant of Spanish which was spoken by Christians and Jews under Moslem yoke, a language colored with an enormous mass of Arabic elements and highly archaic in comparison with the language of the Christians and Jews who lived in the northern "free" or in the "reconquered" areas of the peninsula—e.g., final *-d* < Lat. *-t* in *venid* < *venit;* a dative *mibi* < *mihi* influenced by *tibi*, sporadically attested by Pidal in the 9th- 10th cent. and known in southern Italy; the term *ianua* "door" attested only in Port. *janela* "window"; the verb *ga(r)ir* "to say," a unique reflection on the peninsula of Lat. *garrire* "to chat." Because of the presence of the Arabic words, and because our poems are written in the archaic Mozarabic language of which we know so little, in Hebrew script (without *matres lectionis*), and because they were

[6] To the German student the two neo-Hebrew poets of the 11th-12th cent. are known through Heine's poem "Jehuda ben [*sic!*] Halevy." I shall quote only the lines on Juda Levi:

"Ja, er ward ein grosser Dichter,
Absoluter Traumweltsherrscher,
Mit der Geisterkönigskrone,
Ein Poet von Gottes Gnade,
Der in heiligen Sirventen,
Madrigalen und Terzinen,
Kanzonetten und Ghaselen
Ausgegossen alle Flammen
Seiner gottgeküssten Seele!"

Heine proceeds to compare Juda Levi with the troubadours and Petrarch, from whom Juda Levi is supposedly distinguished by the fact that he did not worship the "false god of Love" or praise a *châtelaine* or a Laura—instead, his lifelong adoration was addressed to the lowly figure of Jerusalem in her ruins. Little did Heine suspect that his Juda Levi (who incidentally was among the first neo-Hebrew poets to sing of worldly love in the sacred language) would one day be revealed as the transmitter of popular, sensuous love poetry before, and leading toward, troubadour and Petrarchan poetry—the cultivator not of "sacred sirventeses, madrigals and *terze rime*," but of the simplest metrical forms which earthly love can inspire.

[7] García Gómez has studied and plans to edit soon twenty similar Mozarabic *jarchas* which he found inserted in Arabic *muwassahas*.

copied by mediaeval Jewish scribes (in Egypt[7a]) who did not understand what they were copying, the task of deciphering these texts is beset with enormous difficulties. The three Semitists, Francisco Cantera, S. M. Stern, and Carcía Gómez, have gradually, by improving one on the other, been able to surmount these difficulties, with the result that the meaning of nearly all of the poems has been finally and definitively cleared up.

All but one of these short verses are found at the very end of Hebrew poems (one is at the end of an Arabic poem) in the part called *jarcha* (literally "departure," cf. the Romance expressions *tornada, envoi, commiato*); the poems themselves are composed in the Hispano-Arabic (strophic) form known as *muwassaha* (literally "necklace").[8] The genre was invented, according to Arabic sources, by Macaddem de Cabra in the 9th cent. and is copiously attested in the 11th cent. *cancionero* of Ibn Quzman called *The Dove's Neck-Ring.* The *jarcha* in Romance is always what we would call a popular *Frauenlied* (a separate composition put in the mouth of a maiden in love). The stanzas of the *muwassahas* in which the Romance *jarcha* is found are written in Hebrew in a more learned style (parallel to that of the more classical Arabic *muwassaha*)[9] and are devoted to a very different subject matter (panegyrics, condolences). In the last Hebrew stanza preceding the Romance *jarcha,* this subject is somehow brought into a more or less strained relationship with the subsequent *jarcha* by the fiction that imaginary personages (a dove, the people, the soul of the poet, the poem itself, a city, etc.) pronounce the words which

[7a] The poems were found in the Geniza at Cairo, that "hiding place" in which discarded written material had been carefully stowed away by the Jews who wished to prevent thereby any profanation of the holy name of God which might possibly have been written in these documents. In the same archives of the Geniza at Cairo were discovered, a few years ago, Hebrew documents of the last two centuries B.C. which cast an entirely new light on Jewish literature and civilization (see W. F. Albright in *AJPh,* LXXII, 105).

[8] I use the simplest Spanish transliteration of these two words.

[9] A 13th cent. theoretician of poetry, the Egyptian Ibn Sana al-Mulk, formulates the requirements of the *jarcha*: (1) it must be astonishing and electrizing; (2) it must be composed in direct speech (put in the mouth of a definite speaker); (3) it must be composed either in Vulgar Arabic or in a Romance vernacular, that is, on a linguistic level below that of the *muwassaha;* (4) since it is the essence of the *muwassaha,* it must be composed before the latter; (5) if a poet does not himself feel able to compose a good *jarcha,* he may borrow one from a fellow poet. We recognize then in the *muwassaha* another mediaeval composition (similar to the macaronic or bilingual poetry mentioned above) on two distinct linguistic or stylistic levels. The Jewish Mozarabic poets showed an interest in popular poetry reminiscent of the Bolognese notaries and jurists of the 13th-14th cent. who inserted Italian popular poetry, which otherwise would be lost for us, into their collections of Latin charts, or of the York chapter cleric of the 14th cent. who "beguiled the tedium of his clerical duties" by copying a precious fragment of a ME love lyric along with a probate of a will (A. C. Cawley, *Speculum,* XXVI, 142).

originally must have been the love song of a girl. For instance, in Stern's No. 5 (by Juda Levi, dated *ca.* 1090) the transitional stanza in Hebrew says:[10]

> *The song* for an absent brother is in my heart like a spark,
> It sings *like a girl* whose heart throbs wild,
> For the time of the meeting comes, but not the beloved.

And now follows the Mozarabic Spanish *jarcha* (continuing the rime of the preceding stanza), which in simple Roman transliteration appears as follows:

> bnyd ḫpskh'dywn sn'lh
> km knd mw qrgwn pwr'lh

In 1894 Menéndez y Pelayo offered the following quite incompetent reading:

> *Venit la fesca iuvencennillo*
> *¿Quem conde meu coragion feryllo?*
>
> (In Mod. Sp.: Venid, fresca jovencita,
> ¿Quién esconde mi corazón herido?)

The modern interpreters read somewhat differently; S. M. Stern in 1948:

> Venida la Pascua (?), advien (?) sin ello
> Como ... meu corazon por ello
>
> (In Fr.: Le temps du rendez-vous
> [les Pâques] est arrivé, mais il arrive
> sans lui; mon cœur est comme pour lui.)

F. Cantera in 1949:

> Venyd la Pasca ed vien(?) sin elu;
> ¡Com' caned meu coraçon por elu!
>
> (In Mod. Sp.: Viene la Pascua y viene sin él.
> ¡Ay como arde mi corazón por él!)

This latter reading has been confirmed as final by García Gómez, who found the same Romance *jarcha* in an Arabic *muwassaha*. The meaning of this distych (in other cases we find tristychs or quatrains) is then in English:

> Easter comes and comes without him.
> How my heart burns bright for him!

One notices here the *rührender Reim* (*elu*, "him"). Usually, however, the rime is not a consonant, but only an assonant (e.g., *vénid—éxid*), at least in those *jarchas* which use Romance word material at the end

[10] In the compilation of information on the various stages through which the deciphering and explanation of this poem have gone, I have been helped by my student, Sister Audrey Aaron.

of the lines; consonant rimes occur in those ends of lines which contain Arabic words (*al-qalag—bi-l-firāq*), a patent influence of Arabic poetic tradition in which the Old Romance assonant is unknown. Another trace of the relative predominance of Arabic influences must be seen in the fact that Hebrew words never occur in the rime or, for that matter, in the body of the *jarchas*.

The content of these very simple 11th-13th cent. Mozarabic stanzas is strictly that of the German and Romance *Frauenlieder*, as may be seen from the following characterization offered by Frings of the twenty-five or thirty oldest German *Frauenstrophen* of the 12th cent. (and the subjoined *jarchas* translated from Stern):

> Einfach wie die Form sind die Themen und Gefühle...: Liebesglück, glückliches Erinnern, Heimkehr und Wiedersehen in nur wenig Fällen;[a] es herrschen die dunkeln und schweren Töne: Abschied und Trennungsschmerz,[b] sehnsüchtiges Harren, Sehnsucht und Klage,[c] Treue in Schwierigkeiten, Sorge um die Treue des Geliebten, um den Bestand der Liebe, Schmerz um den Verlust des Geliebten, Verlassenheit, Eifersucht,[d] Triumph über die Gegnerin. Neben zartem Wünschen[e] steht das offene Verlangen nach dem Mann,[f] Bereitschaft zu rückhaltloser Hingabe. Die eine oder andere Strophe steht dem Taglied nahe.[g][11]

[a] No. 1: Come, my lord, come, / to love is such a bliss, / in these times [?], / to love the son of Ibn al Dayyeni.[12]

No. 3: From the moment my lord comes, / what glad tidings! / like a ray of sunlight / he rises in Guadalajara. [It is not clear whether the happiness of the girl is not one of anticipation of the beloved's *arrival*.]

No. 7: Fair son of a stranger / thou hast drunk with me and hast lain on my breast.

No. 14: What shall I do, mother, what shall I do / My beloved is there at the door! [It must be remarked, however, that it is more the agitated state of mind of the maiden in love than her happiness that is portrayed.]

[b] No. 9: My heart's love is gone from me. / Dear Lord, will he perhaps return? / My yearning for the beloved is so great! / He [or it, sc. my heart][13] is ill, when will he [it] recover?

No. 16: What shall I do or what will become of me? / Oh my beloved, / do not depart from me!

[c] No. 4: Tell me, oh my sisters, / how to bear my pain! / Without the beloved I cannot live / and I shall fly to claim him for my own.

No. 5: [See above in the text.]

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[11] Frings' next sentence, "In Frankreich und Italien suchen wir vergebens nach gleich Schlichtem und gleich Altem dieser Fülle," is called "exaggerated" by Auerbach who cites the anonymous Provençal *alba*, "En un vergier" (Appel, *Prov. Chrestomathie*, No. 53), which Frings himself had mentioned on p. 13. But even this *alba* cannot be said to be as simple (four stanzas!) as a *Frauenstrophe*, and the words of Frings, "dieser Fülle," would still remain unchallenged. But neither Frings nor his reviewer Auerbach knew that in the next few years forty-one Mozarabic *Frauenstrophen* would be unearthed—a parallel of even greater numerical "Fülle" than the twenty-five to thirty German *Frauenstrophen*.

[12] The meaning of the stanza followed by [?] has not yet been cleared up beyond doubt. The translations (the first in English, as far as I know) are according to the last reading arrived at by the Spanish Hebraists.

[13] The transitional stanza in this *muwassaha* of Juda Levi establishes the mean-

No. 10: I was born to misfortune! / Burst, my eyes, and pain still more!
No. 15: Tell me what I must do! / I am waiting for my beloved, / through him I shall die.
No. 18: So much loving, so much loving, / oh beloved, so much loving! / Eyes that were gay became ill / and sorely pain me!
No. 20: Oh beautiful and dark one, apple of my eyes, / who can bear thy absence, / my beloved?

[d] No. 6: Oh God, how can I live / with these stirred feelings? / One who before he greets me, / bids me farewell!

No. 12: Oh my eyes, oh my eyes, behold! / If I could go... [not clear]. / The beguiling city of Valencia sells thy love to others!

No. 17: Oh fair dawn! Tell me whence thou comest! / For I know that thou lovest another, / not me thou lovest.

No. 19: Go, oh impudent one! go thy way! / Thou hast no good faith toward me!

[e] No. 8: Touch me not, oh beloved! / Be satisfied with so much!... [3rd line obscure] / May what has been granted thee suffice!

[f] No. 4: quoted above under (b).

[g] No. 7, quoted above under (a); might be the nucleus of an *alba*.

Again let us compare Frings' reconstruction of the *altromanisches Frauenlied*:

In der Form der Alleinrede oder des Gesprächs, als Partner der Geliebte,[h] die Mutter,[i] die vertraute Freundin in Botenrolle,[j] immer aber das Mädchen im Mittelpunkt, leidenschaftlich und treu, im Streit zwischen Herz und Zwang, wünschend, beglückt, getrennt, verlassen, schmerzbewegt...

[h] Nos. 1, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, above.
[i] Nos. 11, 14.
[j] No. 13.

a reconstruction mainly based on the Old Portuguese *cantigas de amigo*.

As to the partners of the maiden, we meet in the *jarcha* three new personages:

---

ing to be "he" (the beloved), but a later poet of the same group, Abulâfia, in a version of No. 9, makes "it" (the heart) the subject of the sentence. The latter is, as Dámaso Alonso notes, perhaps the original version, which was twisted by Juda Levi in order to accommodate the stanza to his eulogistic poem. But it could also be that Juda Levi's version was the original one if we take *enfermo yed*, "he is ill" to mean "he has fallen ill of love (and must be cured by the maiden)." We could also interpret "he fell ill," *andó enfermo* in Mod. Sp.; *yed* = Lat. *i(v)* > *iit; yed* = *est* is surprising in view of *este* in No. 14. Cf. the parallel Portuguese *cantiga de amigo*: "Tal vai o meu amigo, / madre, com meu amor, / como cervo ferido / do monteiro maior. / E se el vai ferido, irrá morrer al mar, si fará meu amigo, / se eu d'al non pensar."

I disagree with Alonso about another change introduced by Abulâfia in line 1: in Juda Levi's "vayse meu corachon de mib" Abulâfia replaces *meu* by *mib*, which Alonso considers a gross error, testifying perhaps to the ignorance of the 13th cent. poet of the archaic form *mib* (< *mihi* under the influence of *tibi*). But "vayse mib corazon de mib" could very well be paraphrased in modern Spanish by "váse*me el corazon* de mí," the alternative construction to the possessive "váse *mi* corazon." Perhaps the first *mib*, dative personal pronoun for possessive, is intentionally and sophisticatedly introduced in order to stress the contrast: "*my* heart (lit. 'to me the heart,) goes away *from me*."

(1) The maiden addresses a soothsayer: No. 2: "If thou art a soothsayer/and in sooth dost divine,/tell me when he will come to me, /my beloved Isaac!"

(2) a jeweller: No. 11: "The merchant of necklaces, oh mother,/ will lend me no jewels!/A white neck[14] my lord shall see,/ he shall see no adornments!"

(3) a merchant who will be her messenger: No. 13: "Thou goest to Seville on a merchant's mission?/I pray thee, make me friends with Aben Muhayir!"

Here I may insert an observation not made, so far as I know, by the Spanish commentators. While the ambiente in the Portuguese *cantigas de amigo,* in the German *Frauenlieder,* and in OF popular songs is rural, that of the *jarchas* is strictly urban; nature is completely excluded and there is consequently no opportunity for the poet to establish a parallelism between human feeling and nature such as is to be found in German popular song: "diu kleinen vogelline / diu singent in dem walde: dêst menegen herzen liep./mir'n kome min holder geselle, i'n hân der summer wünne niet" (Frings, p. 5). We find mention of the three Spanish cities of Guadalajara, Seville, and Valencia; and the personages of the jeweller and the merchant-messenger also fit into the framework of city life. Likewise, the names of the young men loved by the maidens (in opposition to the practice of OF lyrics, where the lover would be called by the generic name of Robin) seem, in the *jarchas,* to be names of particular persons evidently well-known to the community, as if the city dwellers could appreciate what it means to love Isaac or the son of Ibn Dayyeni or Ibn Muhayir[15] —which strikes us as reminiscent of the inscriptions we may read on walls or posters in our modern cities of the type: "I love Peggy Johnson." We shall discuss later this particularity of the *jarchas.*

Having been able with the help of Frings' treatise to identify, by the procedure of telescoping, the content of the Mozarabic *jarchas* with that of the German (and Romance) *Fraudenlieder,* I shall now

[14] *Col albo,* "my white neck." can be paralleled with Walther's line, "seht wie rôt mir ist der munt," in which Frings with fine intuition sensed the original popular (quite un-Provençal) nuance.

[15] As to *Cidielo* in No. 3, we would find here, according to Baer and Dámaso Alonso (in an article to be mentioned later), an allusion to a historical person, a Jew who lived at the court of Alfonso VI, and the city of Guadalajara would figure in the same poem because of the conquest of this city by King Alfonso in 1086. If, however, Juda Levi has adapted, for the purpose of a panegyric, a pre-existent popular stanza—a possibility admitted by Dámaso Alonso—I do not see the necessity for this historical identification. *Cidielo* in the original popular poem could simply be a term of endearment ("my beloved lord"), cf. in No. 1, *ven, cydy, veni,* "come, oh my lord, come!"

report on a masterly article by the Spanish poet and critic Dámaso Alonso, the greatest living connoisseur of Góngora.[16] It was written without knowledge of Frings' work under the title "Cancioncillas 'de amigo' mozárabes (Primavera temprana de la lírica europea)"—a title carefully chosen by the author to indicate the importance of the *jarchas* for the history of both Pyrenean and European lyrics. Later I shall suggest some further conclusions, not drawn by Alonso, but rendered probable by Frings' world-wide panorama.

As to the Pyrenean aspect, Stern had already recognized the first appearance in 11th-13th cent. *jarchas* of the genre of the Portuguese *cantigas de amor* (hitherto attested only in the *Cancioneiro da Vaticana, ca.* 1200) or love songs of maidens centered around a "friend" (= beloved; cf. the Arabic term *habib* used in the *jarchas* with the same semantic development: friend > beloved). Thus, for instance, our No. 16:

Qué farayo o qué sarád de mibi?	What shall I do or what shall become of me?
Habibi,	Oh my beloved,
non te tolgas de mibi!	do not depart from me!

corresponds exactly to the Portuguese strophe:

Que farey agor', amigo,	What shall I do now, oh beloved,
pois que non queredes migo viver?	since you do not wish to dwell with me?

By offering numerous similar analogies, Alonso is able to make the identification *jarcha* = *cantiga de amigo* absolutely incontrovertible. But the *jarchas* are Spanish compositions—and the hitherto accepted theory of Carolina Michaëlis and Américo Castro, who denied to mediaeval Spain (as opposed to Galicia and Portugal) the existence of lyrical poetry altogether, must consequently be radically revised.

[16] *Revista de Filología española*, XXXIII (1949), 297-349. It is no accident that the philologist who was able to decipher the cryptic poems of Góngora should be attracted by the simple folk songs in the imitation of which Góngora himself so often delighted. The following is a sample of the exuberantly poetic prose of Dámaso Alonso greeting the discovery of the Mozarabic poems: "¡Qué voz tan pura! De un hondón de siglos llega a nuestra embotada sensibilidad de hombres de estos angustiosos mediados del XX una voz fresca y desgarradora. Nítida, exacta, como si brotara ahora de la garganta en flor y de los labios que transparentaban la sangre moza. ¡Eterna doncella enamorada, eterno grito, repetido siempre y siempre nuevo!... Nos mueven... [las *jarchas*] ... por su desnuda, sencilla, trémula e impregnante belleza..." Neatness, exactness, nudity—we feel in these words (and in Alonso's image of the throat and lips of the maiden) the impression made on the Spanish 20th cent. critic by the sophisticated poets Baudelaire and Mallarmé—a very special approach indeed, but as legitimate as that of the preromantics toward popular poetry; the most civilized apostles of sophistication crave for the simple and popular as much as do primitivists and attackers of civilization.

According to this theory Spanish popular lyrical poetry did not appear before the 15th cent. in the *cancioneros* (with some scanty foreshadowings in the 13th and 14th cent.) or even as late as Lope (in popular lyrical pieces inserted in his plays). Thus Spain was conceived by these scholars to be essentially "the land without lyrics,"[17]

[17] In 1948, when Stern published his commentary on the Mozarabic poems, there appeared Américo Castro's book, *España en su historia*, a grandiose phantasmagoria in which the Spanish national character is made to appear as a historically fixed, nay congealed, mass of ways of thinking and reactions, as a kind of *Dauerspanier* (as I allowed myself to remark jestingly in a critique in *Nueva Revista de Filología hispánica*, III, 141, alluding to similar German attempts of the 1920s to create an allegorical figure of the *Dauerfranzose*). An entire page of Castro's work is devoted to the theme of the lack of Castilian mediaeval lyrics which he sees as a positive and necessary feature of the Spanish national character (which was formed by Castile)—the rejection of the emotional in poetry. I cannot refrain from quoting in translation the following lines (pp. 490 seq.) which were refuted in the very moment in which they appeared:

"Poetry based on pure emotional experience, without justification in objective creed, did not exist in Castile during the XIth, XIIth, and XIIIth centuries, while epic poems abound in that period. Castile was indeed besieged from all four corners by lyrical currents and in resisting them she used the same energy which she was to use in the Castilianization of the area in which that art was possible and well-received. It would have been easy for the bilingual Jews... to translate... the most beautiful poetry of Ibn Hazm or Yehuda ha-Leví, but nothing of this... was allowed to penetrate into the Castilian language. If Castile had fallen into such seductive temptations, she would not have been herself, she would not have given its national form to Spain: she could not escape her incapsulation in faith... The Castilian lived in the wholeness of his intact being ..., a life merged into faith, deprived of that emotional and rational expressivity which was cultivated by the Moslem because compatible with his creed... Literature in Castile did not originate in mere enjoyment of the senses nor in imagination..."

Notice particularly the ironic detail of the bilingual Jews who should have introduced the poetry of their correligionist Juda Levi into Spanish literature, but who were prevented from doing so by the resistance of the orthodox, austere Spanish national character (by the statue of stone of *Madre España*, as it were). Yet, in historic reality, in a manner characteristic of the eternal Jew—of the *Dauerjude*, if I may say so, again jestingly, whose historic mission it is to be a *Kulturträger* wherever he settles—Juda Levi preserves for us, "as if in a sterilized flask of alcohol" (Dámaso Alonso's graphic phrase), the oldest vestiges of sensuous, imaginative Spanish lyrical poetry. Later on, Moroccan Jews preserved the only complete version of the *romance* "Conde Arnaldos" of the latter-day Jewish prophet Sabbatai Zevi who in the 17th cent. would recite, along with Hebrew psalms, the old Spanish *romance* "Ya se sale Melisendro," which we know in its complete form only through him. The Jew was aided in this mission by two of his typical traits: (1) the congenital polyglottism of his race and his interest in civilizations not his own; (2) his respect for the written word (because this might be the Word of God), and the bookishness or literalism of the Jewish tradition of the scribes, who when copying the works of their beloved Juda Levi were bound to copy also, without understanding them, the Romance insertions in his Hebrew poems. These facts are not underlined by Dámaso Alonso who, in a harmonizing manner so dear to Spanish scholars, as if confirming Castro's views, speaks only of "Moors and Jews under the sun of Andalusia," and remains be-

a pre-eminently epic nation which delighted in narrative, whether pseudohistoric or legendary (*Poema de Myo Cid,* Berceo). But, in the light of the discovery or our *jarchas,* modern Spanish popular stanzas or *villancicos* (as published by Cejador) such as:

Amor, no me dejes	Love, do not leave me,
que me moriré	for I shall die

corresponding to our No. 15:

Est' al-habib espero,	I am waiting for my beloved,
por él morrayu	through him I shall die

appear to contain an age-old primitive layer of Spanish poetry whose continuity since the 11th cent. is now firmly established. The *villancico* (or "nuclear lines," as Alonso calls it) is the basis for potential longer poems (what the Spaniards call *glosas*) in which it appears as refrain (Sp. *estribillo*)—just as on the basis of the *jarchas* the expanded poems of *muwassaha* type were built by the Judeo-Mozarabic poets (cf. the statement, quoted in note 9, of Ibn Sana al-Mulk).

As Alonso has also pointed out, the *jarcha* now overshadows in importance the *zéjel,* which for Nykl (*Bull. hisp.,* XLI) and Menéndez Pidal (*Bull. hisp.,* XL) was the basis of troubadour lyrics. The *zéjel,* an Arabic lyrical subgenre of which many examples are found in the *cancionero* of Ibn Quzman, is a somewhat more popular variant of the *muwassaha.* In the *zéjels* the Arabic language is adulterated by many Spanish forms; the stanzaic form, unknown to classical Arabic, is used; the rime scheme can be brought into relationship with certain metrical forms used by the first troubadour, William of Aquitaine (and also by later poets as diversified as the Archpriest of Hita, Jacopone da Todi, Clément Marot, Du Bellay, and even Victor Hugo). And sometimes we find in the *zéjels* reflections of a concept of courtly love and of social fictions (parallels to addressing the lady as *midons* and to the concept of the *lauzengier*) which are somewhat reminiscent of troubadour poetry (although many poems of Ibn Quz-

nevolently silent about the fact that the Mozarabic songs most imperiously refute Castro's theory of the "unlyrical character of mediaeval Spain."

The recent discovery of the Mozarabic *jarchas* is in truth, it seems to me, a stern warning to all cultural theorizers against building their fallacious architectures on the quicksand of the transient state of their own historical information rather than on abiding facts of culture. And I should like to ask my Spanish friends: Who pays the greater tribute to the eternal genius of a people, the scholar who enshrines the national character in certain rigid, deterministic, pseudohistoric formulae, or the one who, believing in the universality and freedom of the geniuses (the "Unmittelbarkeit zu Gott") of all peoples, expects from all of them "that they be human," accessible, that is, to what all of us feel to be the common patrimony of man? For the true humanist (who *nihil humani a se alienum putat*) it is most gratifying to learn that in 11th-cent. Spain there breathed the same spirit of primitive love as in Charlemagne's 8th-cent. Frankish kingdom, or in Hebrew Palestine, or in faraway Russia or China.

man with their Oriental sensuousness and their addiction to wine and orgy deviate from the restrained and sober tone of the troubadours). I have always (along with such scholars as Rodrigues Lapa) considered this supposed Arabic parallel with troubadour poetry most unfortunate (cf. *L'Amour lointain de Jaufré Rudel,* University of North Carolina Studies, Romance Section, V, 1941)—and I now see my opinion vindicated in Alonso's conclusions. It is the *villancico,* not the *zéjel,* that forms the nucleus of popular Spanish (or Romance) poetry, and therefore the explanation of troubadour poetry must start from these simplest popular forms attested by the *jarchas* much earlier than the first Provençal troubadour poems. Juda Levi was a contemporary of William of Aquitaine who lived 1071-1127, but since he inserted into his learned Hebrew poems folk songs traceable to a much older tradition, we must assume this very tradition (of the *cantiga de amigo* or *Frauenlied*) to be at the basis of European lyrics.[18] And

[18] Dámaso Alonso has pointed out that the adaptation of popular *cantigas de amigo* to quite different ends by the Mozarabic poets is comparable to the procedure of the Marqués de Santillana in his poem "Por una gentil floresta." Indeed, we find, in the *villancicos* of this 15th cent. poem of courtly tradition, popular, assonanced love songs, the assonance occasionally revealing archaic linguistic forms (e.g., *pene-elle,* where the pronoun *elle* represents the Spanish of the 11th-12th cent.)—both features are reminiscent of the Mozarabic poets. What is peculiar to Santillana's poem, however, is the artistry with which he succeeded in fitting together four distinct popular *refrains* which he had collected and which he treated like so many old precious stones which require a new setting according to the fashion of the day. He devised a narrative theme subtler than that by which in the 13th-cent. French *Guillaume de Dôle* the *chansons d'histoire* are motivated: four persons are introduced, each with his own motive for singing his particular *villancico,* three maidens representing three variant amorous attitudes and a rejected lover (who, we come to realize, can be only the father of the young girls). It is through polyphonic songs (or music, cf. my article on "world harmony" in *Traditio,* III) that the different emotions are fused, tempered, and sublimated; we find explicit allusions to musical harmony (*esta cancion tan honesta—con muy honesta mesura—con ordenança cantavan tan consonante*), and to the uninterrupted flow of the music (*pues las dos aveis cantado, a mi conviene que cante—mas cantat pues que cantamos*). The final effect of the "concert of four voices" is that of love tempered by melancholy—the melancholy of the father, who has taken the conventional role of the abdicating lover in order to express the feeling of paternal resignation to that reality in which the father must give way in his daughters' lives. Thus the popular *refrains,* intended to render simple spontaneous feeling, have been lifted by Santillana to the plane of subtle, reflective art.

Joseph G. Fucilla, *MLN,* LXVI, 167, has proved recently that Santillana's *villancico* goes back directly to Boccaccio's sonnet "Intorn' ad una fonte in un pratello," *Opere minori* (Florence, 1943), p. 535, in which "the action takes place in a flowery meadow, involves three beautiful ladies who talk of love and have an eavesdropper," the poet. Fucilla's discovery confirms my supposition that the musical element (the singing) was added by Santillana, who was thus enabled to resort to old popular *refrains.* It may be added that the basic motif of both Boccaccio's and Santillana's poems is current in popular OF and ME poetry: Cawley, *loc. cit.,* commenting on the "lyrical waif" discovered by him, i.e., the ME stanza in which the poet overhears the complaint of a lonely maiden ("wela hay / for faute of love I stand alone"), mentions the OF antecedents of this motif; "the variety of *chanson dramatique* in which the poet overhears the lament of a young girl re-

since Abuláfia in the 13th cent. wrote in the traditional language of the 11th-12th cent., we may suppose that Juda Levi similarly prolonged a centuries-old literary tradition. Thus Alonso is justified in calling the *jarchas* "the early spring of European lyrics," composed as they were at a period when the only attested poetry written in the vernaculars was epic in nature (the French *Chanson de Sainte Eulalie* of the 9th cent. and *Saint Alexis* of the middle of the 11th cent.).[19]

Dámaso Alonso, perhaps in a less comprehensive way than Frings, puts the *jarchas* into the framework of "European" and universal lyrical poetry; it is his conviction that man everywhere is endowed with the gift of song ("el canto, es decir, la lírica, es una inalienable necesidad del ser humano"). But perhaps we may go somewhat further than Alonso in defining the nature of the subgenre represented by the *jarcha,* and gain a deeper insight into the birth of lyrical poetry in general.

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peats a very primitive theme of French lyric poetry" (*amie sui senz ami*), in the words of Helen E. Sandison. We are now able to reconstruct the complete literary ancestry of Santillana's poem:

(1) a popular lyrical *Frauenstrophe* or *refrain* (containing the complaint of a lonely young girl, of the type of the OF *amie sui senz ami* or of the ME stanza discovered by Cawley), which was perhaps a part of

(2) a popular lyrical-narrative *chanson d'aventure* in which the poet overhears the complaint of the young girl (with the narrative developed in the manner of the ME poem printed by Flügel, v. Cawley);

(3) the *Guillaume de Dôle* romance which introduces a narrative device whereby different older popular love songs are strung together;

(4) Boccaccio, who imagines in his sonnet a situation ("Intorn' ad una fonte ...") in which the poet is able to overhear the conversation of *three* beautiful maidens longing for their lovers.

Santillana, inspired by popular Spanish poems representing type No. 1 or 2, and by Boccaccio's sonnet, has in his own composition added the idea of the "concert in miniature."

[19] We may assume that such Pyrenean *Frauenlieder* existed as early as the 8th cent., if we may draw inferences from a German parallel and explain the *winileodos* of a capitulary of Charlemagne in 789 (which forbade German abbesses "uuinileodos scribere vel mittere praesumant") as *cantigas de amigo*, with which phrase *winileodos* is textually synonymous. This does not seem to be the *communis opinio* of German scholars. Cf. Ehrismann, *Geschichte d. deutschen Lit.*, I, 23 seq., who explains *winileodos* from a derived meaning of OHG *wini* (not from *amicus, dilectus*, but from *sodalis*); consequently the *winileodos*, also mentioned in OHG glosses referring to *plebejos psalmos* of Canon 59 of the Council of Laodicea and in a gloss to the words of Venantius Fortunatus, *barbara carmina leudos*, are "*Gesellen- oder Gesellschaftslieder*" of the kind mentioned in the Venerable Bede's report on Caedmon ("ut omnes per ordinem cantare deberent"). But, on the other hand, Ehrismann does not deny that in the passage of Charlemagne's capitulary "die den Nonnen verbotenen Lieder sind doch wohl ... erotischen Inhalts gewesen und die Stelle ist dann der älteste Beleg für die existenz von deutschen Liebesliedern."—Professor Kemp Malone has called my attention to the two OE *Fraudenlieder* contained in the *Exeter Book* (ms. of the 9th cent.) which thus antedate considerably the *jarchas*. Cf. the translations in Malone's *Ten Old English Poems* (Baltimore, 1941).

Dámaso Alonso has recognized the central or "nuclear" importance of the *villancico* with which he identifies our 11th-13th cent. *jarchas*. But he has perhaps not sufficiently stressed their basic identity with the OF 12th-13th cent. *refrains* as described by Jeanroy in *Les Origines de la poésie lyrique*. It must be borne in mind that the term *refrain* is used by Jeanroy to mean not simply a repeated line, but a definite OF lyrical subgenre described by him thus (p. 103):

> De très courts morceaux, comptant ordinairement de un à quatre vers ... tantôt isolés, tantôt intercalés dans d'autres œuvres; mais, dans ce dernier cas, ce ne sont pas les mêmes qui sont répétés après chacun des couplets, dont ils sont souvent tout à fait indépendants ... Dans nos refrains, la rime est l'exception ... il y en a bien un certain nombre qu'on peut diviser en deux vers à rimes plates ... ou en trois vers dont deux riment ensemble ... il arrive très souvent que les refrains présentent un sens incomplet. Sans doute, il y en a une foule qui, n'étant que des effusions amoureuses, satisfont pleinement l'esprit ... De quelles pièces les refrains sont-ils des fragments? Nous pouvons répondre en toute assurance: de chansons à danser ... le roman de Guillaume de Dôle ... et quelques autres textes anciens nous ont conservé des strophes complètes de ces chansons de danse: les refrains y trouvent place, mais ils ne les constituent pas seuls: ...
>
> Aaliz main se leva,
> *Bon jor ait qui mon cuer a*
> biau se vesti et para,
> desoz l'aunoi.
> *Bon jor ait qui mon cuer a*
> *n'est pas o moi* ...
>
> ... Ce sont ces refrains, ordinairement lyriques qui se sont conservés; tandis que l'autre partie de la pièce, la partie narrative, s'est perdue. On voit clairement ... non seulement que nos refrains ne sont que des fragments, mais qu'ils jouaient, dans les morceaux auxquels ils appartenaient, le rôle de nos refrains actuels, et qu'ils y étaient répétés (à l'origine probablement par le chœur répondant au soliste). C'est ce qui explique qu'ils se soient imprimés plus profondément dans la mémoire, et qu'ils aient seuls survécu.

Among the examples of such fragmentarily transmitted *refrains* in the OF meaning (which are "refrains" also in the modern meaning) we find many entirely consonant with our *jarchas* (some rimed, some without rime):

> Amis douz, li malz que j'ai vient de vous.
>
> Amors sont perdues, seulete demour.
>
> Robin, douz ami, perdu vos ai;
> a grant douleur de vous me departirai.
>
> Biaus douz amis Robins que j'aim mout et désir,
> amourous et jolis, pourquoy demourez vos tant?
>
> Hé amis li biaulz, trop m'aveis obliés.
>
> Je vous cuydois des amants le plus saige,
> mais je congnois vostre lasche couraige ...
>
> Musairs, tu me truffes, quier aillor ta truffe.

If we may judge by these OF parallels, *jarcha* (=*refrain*) No. 5

Venyd la Pasca ed vien sin elu;
¡Com' caned meu coraçon por elu!

originally formed a part of a narrative (now lost) of the type *Aaliz main se leva,* which would have been improvised by a *praecantor* (*Vorsänger*) with the choir answering at stated intervals with the refrain *Venyd la Pasca* . . . corresponding to *Bon jor ait qui mon cuer a.* (This original narrative part must, of course, be distinguished from the *muwassaha* secondarily built by the Judeo-Mozarabic poets on the popular fragments which were all that was preserved of the original narrative-lyrical poem.)

Where within primitive lyricism should we then place the narrative-lyrical love songs of women inferred from the *jarchas* (=*refrains*)? Obviously in that pre-Christian framework of collective, improvised dancing songs of women in springtime which G. Paris, followed therein by Frings, recognized to be at the base of all lyrics in the Romance and Germanic vernaculars; the time of the rejuvenation of nature and of the human heart encourages young women (or encourages the poets to imagine such a feminine move!) to throw off, in a fictitious "woman's Saturnalia," the yoke of custom and law, the yoke of mothers and husbands, and to engage in gay, licentious celebration of *Omnia vincit amor,* of the incontestable power and rights of love. No wonder the Church looked at such *cantica amatoria, obscoena, turpia,* at the *chori fœminei* (*mulierum*), at the *winilcodos* (see Voretzsch, *Einführung in die altfrz. Lit.*, pp. 62-63), as revivals of diabolic paganism. Of the original spring song (*reverdie*), of the *kalenda maya*[20] and the *regina avrillosa,* little remains in our *jarchas*; but the allusions to Easter (*Pasca,* cf. O. Prov. *lo gais temps de pascor*), to the mother (as the representative of normal order, as in the Portuguese *cantigas de amor*), and to the sisters (*ermanelas,* the choir of maidens in love like the protagonist) are precious vestigial traits. No express reference to dancing is found in the *jarchas,* but the same is true of the OF *refrains* quoted above and indeed such a reference was superfluous, since the texture of the complete song (a few lyrical refrain lines woven into a narrative of several stanzas) was enough in itself to suggest dancing. By using, from the whole of the original poem, only the *refrain* or *villancico* (which was perhaps all that they remembered because, as Jeanroy states for the OF *refrains,* the repeated choral parts must have impressed themselves more deeply into the memory than the improvised narrative stanzas) and by stretching the meaning of the fragments so as to fit somehow into their quite different compositions (panegyrics, condolences, etc.), the Jewish poets

[20] Vestiges of Spanish versions of the May songs have been mentioned by Menéndez Pidal, *Estudios literarios,* p. 301

intellectualized the originals, deprived as these were of their natural setting. This can be seen best by the use made of No. 5 (*Venyd la Pasca . . .*). In the Hebrew stanza preceding the *jarcha*, the cosmic harmony between reborn nature and reborn feeling of love (the verb *caned=candet*, "burns bright," suggesting the warmth returning to both nature and heart(has been weakened by the degradation of *Pasca* to an expression for "date, time of meeting."

This transplantation of original popular dancing songs into learned poetry might perhaps also explain the "urbanization," indicated above, of the setting in nature characteristic of the original dancing song. One might suppose that the lack of any reference to nature in the *jarchas* is due to the fact that such references may have been contained in the narrative part which is lost. Similarly the *refrain* of *Aaliz main se leva* does not refer to nature, though nature is represented in the line *desoz l'aunoi*, "under the alder trees," of the narrative part. But the explicit mention of cities and city dwellers in the *jarchas* cannot be explained in this manner; the popular poems were perhaps retouched by the Jewish poets, all city dwellers.

Another feature which shows that the *jarchas*, while representing indeed a "primavera temprana de la lírica europea," are not entirely faithful to the original character of dancing songs, is the somber aspect of love which prevails in them (a feature, as we have seen, also characteristic of the German *Frauenlied*). G. Paris had made a similar observation about the OF *refrains*:

> . . . la grande masse des refrains se rapporte simplement à l'amour [not to the dance]: dans les plus anciens ils ne figurent que comme un sentiment très général, fleur de gaieté, de printemps et de fête; mais *plus tard* on le voit précisé, et l'*on rencontre, quoique très rarement, l'expression de l'amour triste*, qui semble singulière en pareille occurrence et n'est d'ailleurs jamais bien profonde [italics mine].

The *jarchas* had reached this stage of "sad love" earlier than the OF refrains and the German *Frauenlieder*.

If we now compare our *jarchas* with the Portuguese *cantigas de amigo*, we are struck not only by the allusions in the latter to the background of nature and to dancing[21] in nature, as in the stanza

Baylemos nos ja todas, todas, ay amigas,	Let us all dance, all of us, oh friends,
Sô aquestas avelaneyras floridas,	under these blossoming hazeltrees
e quem for velida como nos velidas,	and whatever maiden is fair as we are
se amigo amar,	fair,
	if only she is in love,
sô aquestas avelaneyras floridas	will, under these blossoming hazeltrees,
verrá baylar	come and dance

[21] The onomatopoeic refrain "edoi lelia doura," suggestive of music and dancing as found in the Portuguese *cantigas de amigo*, has been correctly compared by Frings with the *tandaradai* of Walther's *Unter der linden*.

but also by the particular feature, characteristic of Galician-Portuguese poetry, of parallelistic structure (which, incidentally, we also find in Hebrew and Chinese[22] lyrical poetry). Compare the following example of a (narrative) *alba* put in the mouth of a maiden:

Levad', amigo, que dormides as *manhanas frias*
toda-las aves do mundo d'amor *diziam*
Leda mh'ando eu.
Levad', amigo, que dormide-las *frias manhanas*
toda-las aves do mundo d'amor *cantavan*,
Leda mh'ando eu...

Arise, oh beloved, who art sleeping in the *chilly morn*,
all the birds of the world *do speak* of love,
I leave this spot rejoicing.
Arise, oh beloved, who art sleeping in the *morning chill*,
all the birds of the world *do sing* of love,
I leave this spot rejoicing.

It is clear that here we have to do with a dance arrangement different from the one we find in the French *refrains* and in the Mozarabic *jarchas*. For these we must assume a *praecantor*[22a] improvising the narrative part (often lost) and a choir (of women) making the lyrical response (generally preserved), whereas in the Portuguese songs we have to do with two (half-)choirs of women between which are distributed both the narrative and the lyrical parts, which are indissolubly fused; one half-choir is obviously supposed to sing the stanza "Levad', amigo, que dormides as manhanas frias," while the second half-choir intones the stanza "Levad', amigo, que dormide-las frias manhanas." The syntactic and lexicological parallelism is here obviously the reflection of the antiphonal arrangement; it combines its effects with those of the dance movements to establish, above the diversity of expression, a basic unity of mood.[23] In the Galician-Portuguese paral-

[22] Dámaso Alonso (without knowing of Frings) and before him Rodrigues Lapa have quoted the Chinese (parallelistic!) *Frauenlied* of the 7th cent. B.C. from the same English translation of A. Waley, *The Book of Songs* (London, 1937):

"A very handsome gentleman
waited for me in the lane;
I am sorry I did not go with him.
A very splendid gentleman
waited for me in the hall;
I am sorry I did not keep company with him."

[22a] Or perhaps a *praecantrix* who, while improvising, acted out the part in a monodrama. See Bédier, *Revue des deux mondes*, 1896 and 1906, and Vossler, *Die Dichtungsformen der Romanen*, p. 150.

[23] I suspect the *parallelismus membrorum* of Hebrew lyrical poetry also to be due to responses of two dancing half-choirs—and Professor Albright thinks this explanation to be quite valid. Parallelistic structure is attested in Semitic and Egyptian hymnal literature as early as 2000 B.C. and the combination of singing

lelistic compositions the whole text of the poem with its fusion of the narrative and the lyrical parts is preserved (as, for instance, in the *alba* quoted above, eight complete stanzas), whereas in France and Spain the narrative part of the *praecantor* was lost, and only the lyrical chorus survived. The *jarchas* and the *cantigas de amor* belong to the same lyrical subgenre of *Frauenlieder*, but they correspond to a different method of staging the dancing that underlies them. The parallelism of the Portuguese songs is not necessarily a secondary innovation of the Galician poets, as Alonso would have it, but is one of the possibilities given with primitive dancing.

Are we now able to confirm, with the help of the *jarchas*, Frings' belief in the historical connection between the popular *Frauenlieder* and troubadour (and Minnesang) poetry? Frings attempts to show that the so-called objective or narrative subgenres of Provençal lyrics, found in two of the oldest troubadours (William of Aquitaine and Marcabrun), the *alba* and the *pastorela*, are nothing but dramatically expanded versions of the monologues (in which dialogue was latent)[24] of the *Frauenlieder* and therefore, like the latter, find reflections over the whole world. Surely our No. 7 ("Fair son of a stranger / thou hast drunk with me and hast lain on my breast") is the nucleus of an *alba*[25] in its most primitive form of a young maiden's *Glückslaut*, and our No. 19 ("Go, oh impudent one! go thy way! / Thou hast no good faith

and dancing is also a primitive feature of early Oriental liturgy. Women's songs with parallelistic structure (and, as I suppose, half-choirs) are well-known in the Old Testament; the song of Miriam, Ex. 15, dated by Albright as belonging to the 13th cent. B.C., is a song response to Moses; the song of Deborah, Judg. 5, dated 12th cent. B.C., is a response to Barak. The parallelistic technique continues with a profusion of imagery in the Psalms of David and in the Song of Songs. Karl Goldmark in his opera *The Queen of Sheba* (Act I, Scene 3) put on the modern stage two dancing half-choirs of women chanting responsively words taken from the Song of Songs.

[24] I may point out the parallel with Greek drama, which developed from collective choral lyrics to dialogue (through the introduction, by Thespis, of a choragus-protagonist conversing with the choir) to true drama with Aeschylus, who introduced the deuteragonist; Adam de la Halle's OF pastoral play would be the parallel to the fully developed Greek drama.

[25] One may note that the genre of the *alba* or *Taglied*, which is rather rare in the Portuguese *cancioneiros* and is represented in the *jarchas* only once, while it reached a rich development in Provençal, is in its oldest specimen (Appel's piece No. 53, cf. Frings) still linked to the *Frauenlied*: "En un vergier sotz fuella d'albespi / tenc la donna son amic costa si..." The *donna* is here the protagonist and the sole speaker. Only later did the usual type of *alba* with the loving youth as speaker crystallize, as an expanded and secondary *Mannesstrophe*. As for Marcabrun's *pastorela*, "A la fontana del vergier," the complaint against King Louis who has taken the beloved youth away from the maiden on a crusade, this motif is closely related to the motif, in the Portuguese *cantigas de amor*, of the absence of the fiancé *en cas del rei*. See also Jeanroy, *Les Origines*, pp. 169 and 207.

toward me!") is the nucleus of a *pastorela*, of a *Begegnung* in which a negative answer is given by the maiden to the courting youth.[26]

The *jarchas* then corroborate Frings' picture of the popular layer underlying troubadour poetry. In the troubadour poems that have come down to us, the only genre that has remained relatively faithful (if we neglect the hymnic motif superimposed on some of its representatives, of the awakening of the Christian from the night of sin) to the original popular layer is the *alba*, with its open insistence on sexual enjoyment; this genre was able to resist the superstructure later imposed by courtly ideology, which totally banned from Provençal love poetry the popular motif of the initiative of woman and gave man alone the opportunity to express his feelings (sophisticated feelings of a Platonic nature). In the rarefied atmosphere of troubadour poetry the *alba* is the one island where the *Glüskslaut* of the sexually demanding woman finds resonance. In the *pastorela* the original popular kernel of *Begegnung* and the frank debate[27] centering on sexual enjoyment is overlaid more heavily with courtly didacticism, which teaches that a couple consisting of a knight and a rustic lass is ill-matched. Surely the subjective subgenre of the *cansó* (*canzone*)—which describes not events but feelings, and only those feelings of a man abdicating sexual pleasure (so that this genre would be considered by a Dante as the most sublime lyrical form, worthy of a "tragic" style)—represents the last stage of the development of mediaeval lyrics, the farthest removed from the popular basis of European lyricism.

If we compare our *jarchas* with the series of German and Romance *Frauenlieder* which have been attested by Frings, we cannot fail to glimpse a world-embracing perspective illuminating the genesis ("unantastbar volkstümlich" in character, as Frings says) of European lyrical poetry in general. We are brought ultimately to visualize a primitive world of women dancing and chanting stanzas of love provided for them by the poets (a *Glückslaut* or *Klage* "im Munde des

[26] It may be remarked that the transitional Hebrew stanzas of the *muwassahas* preceding the Romance *jarchas* attempt to develop in a narrative of their own the data of the short *cantiga de amigo* (of course, for the purpose of creating the necessary transition between two poems originally unrelated); they try to make explicit the outward situation which is implicit in the words spoken by the girl. Cf. the transition to No. 9: "My heart aches for a young doe... She lifts her pure face full of tears toward the sky. The day on which they told her 'Your friend is ill,' she cried out with bitterness..." From this a *Begegnung* scene could very easily be developed.

[27] A clear case of *Durchschichtung* in Frings' sense is the 13th-cent. Sicilian poem *Rosa fresca aulentissima*, where the courtly elements, the Gallicisms, and the stanzaic form borrowed from Christian hymns failed to alter the basic texture of a popular *contrasto* in which can be found residual traces of an archaic motif underlying the *chanson à transformations* (cf. Goethe's "Liebhaber in allen Gestalten," Mistral's song of Magàli, etc.), namely the motif of *magic* transformation.

Mädchens, aber von einem Mann, dem Dichter, hineingelegt"), who thus achieve a vicarious pleasure: that of hearing their own conception of woman (as a passionate being who voices only her own uninhibited desire) echoed by the women who sing the stanzas composed for them. We owe primeval lyricism to men, who have ever known how to impersonate their own passion in the form of woman's desire. Thus woman has in primitive world literature a role imposed upon her by man, answering him with the very words of longing he has suggested to her. Such a collaboration of the two sexes is no *creatio ex nihilo*—unless we consider the polarity of and the interplay between the sexes a *nihil*.

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GOETHE AND THE RUSSIAN AND POLISH ROMANTICS

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THERE exists in both Russia and Poland a rich literature on Goethe, including innumerable special monographs and translations of *Werther*, the lyrics, *Wilhelm Meister*, and especially *Faust*.[1] I may say without exaggeration that in Poland and Russia each generation down to the present has had its own Polish or Russian *Faust*.

Space prevents me from surveying the periods in which Russians and Poles showed increased interest in Goethe. But I should like to stress at least a few facts. The first indications of some knowledge of and interest in Goethe appeared in both literatures almost simultaneously, in Poland in 1777 and in Russia in 1781, when the first Russian translation of *Werther* was made. The culmination of Goethe's vogue in Russia occurred between 1825 and 1845. Before and after this period Russian literature was rather under the influence of France or England. Actually Goethe never exercised any great influence on Russian literature, and never attained the prestige of Byron, Sir Walter Scott, or Schiller. The greatest Russian writers remained beyond the radius of his influence. Pushkin, who laid the foundations of modern Russian literature, was unaffected by him, whereas his debt to the French classical writers, to Byron, Scott, Shakespeare, and even Mickiewicz, who provoked him ideologically, is considerable. Once Pushkin said: "Shakespeare a saisi les passions, Goethe le costume." Mickiewicz, who knew Pushkin very well, wrote in his article dedicated to the memory of the Russian poet: "He did not hold in high esteem those authors who were without a goal, without any direction. He disliked philosophical

[1] For Goethe in Russian literature and in Russia, see V. Žirmunskij, *Goethe v russkoj literature* (Leningrad, 1937); *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, IV-VI (Moscow, 1932); and R. Yagoditsch, "Goethe und seine russischen Zeitgenossen," *Germanoslavica*, Heft III (1931-32). For Goethe and Poland, see K. Wojciechowski, *Werter w Polsce* (Lwow, 1925); J.Kleiner, *W kręgu Mickiewicza i Goethego* (Warsaw, 1938); Zofia Ciechanowska, "Mickiewicz a Goethe," *Pam. Lit.* XXI (1924-25), 92-125, as well as "Twórczość Goethego a romantyzm polski," Part I, *Sprawozdania Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności*, XXXVII (1932), 15-19, and "Twórczość Goethego w Polsce," *Twórczość*, August 1949 (an issue dedicated to Goethe); G. Karpeles, *Goethe in Polen* (Berlin, 1890), and the review of this book by Roman Pilat, *Kwartalnik historyczny*, IV (1890), 535-545; and finally, S. Wukadinović, *Goethe und Polen* (Gdańsk, 1930).

scepticism and the aesthetic coldness of Goethe."[2] Lermontov's masters were Byron, Schiller, and the French romantics and there is very little to say about his connections with Goethe.[3] In fact, among important Russian literary figures, only Zhukovsky, Turgenev, Tiutchev, A. Tolstoy, and Fet came under Goethe's influence to any extent.

Some difference exists in this respect between Polish and Russian literatures, but it would be difficult to maintain that Goethe had a direct and widespread influence on Polish literature. The greatest Polish literary figure of the nineteenth century, the head of the Polish romantic school, Adam Mickiewicz, in many ways found himself in the atmosphere of Goethe's themes and literary genres, giving to Poland a Polish *Werther*, a Polish *Faust*, and a Polish *Hermann und Dorothea*. But all these Polish pendants to Goethe were in reality quite distant from him.

The same may be said for the other two members of the Polish romantic trinity, Slowacki and Krasiński. In other various works they show direct contacts with Goethe's *Faust*, but everywhere they maintain strong reservations.

My main subject, however, will not be an analysis of purely literary facts and problems. I shall discuss rather what I believe to be more important and more interesting, the ideological reactions of the Russians and Poles to Goethe.

Although I recognize the valuable achievements of the German, Russian, and Polish formalists, I do not believe that it is possible to place studies in literature under the same conditions as the sciences. Even within the framework of the liberal arts, one cannot apply the very same methods of investigation to all the arts. The efforts to detach literature from life are vain. There have been writers, like Tolstoy, who would never have accepted a purely formalistic approach to their creative work. To Tolstoy the pathos of his writings lay in their ideology. Naturally, I cannot here go into a discussion of methodological problems, but I would like to emphasize that, in considering that great phenomenon of modern European culture which is Goethe, I shall not separate the man from the artist. My guide in this approach is Walt Whitman:

> Understand that you can have in your writing no qualities which you do not honestly entertain in yourself. Understand that you cannot keep out of your writing the indication of the evil or shallowness you entertain in yourself. If you love to have a servant stand behind your chair at dinner, it will appear in your

[2] It is true that one may find some statements in which Pushkin praises Goethe, but these expressions of official recognition do not change the fact that Pushkin remained unaffected by Goethe. See G. Glebov, "Puškin i Goethe," *Zven'ja*, II (1933), 41-64, and also *Puškin o literature* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1934).

[3] See A. Fedorov, "Tvorčestvo Lermontova i Zapadnye Literatury," *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, XLIII-XLIX (Moscow, 1941), 129-226.

writing; if you possess a vile opinion of women, or if you grudge anything, or doubt immortality, these will appear by what you leave unsaid more than by what you say. There is no trick or cunning, no art or recipe by which you can have in your writing that which you do not possess in yourself—that which is not in you cannot appear in your writing. No rival of life—no sham for generation—no painting friendship or love by one who is neither friend or lover.[4]

Well known is Napoleon's greeting at his famous meeting with Goethe: "Voilà un homme!"[5] This witty adaptation of "Ecce homo" will be the leitmotif of my paper.

All the Russians and Poles who went to see Goethe or discussed him in their writings or in private correspondence knew very well that modesty was not the outstanding quality of this Olympian. Goethe did not need to hear all the German and non-German panegyrics which for two hundred years have resounded in the world, or to examine the monuments erected by his admirers, in order to act with quite a sufficient estimation of his extraordinary greatness. And he attained this lucid and perspicacious judgment very early in his life. He wrote to Lavater in 1780:

The task with which I am charged and which becomes with each day easier and more difficult demands my attention day and night, my duty is constantly dearer to me and I would like to equal in it the greatest men. This ambition to raise as high as possible the pyramid of my existence, the foundation of which is now designed and laid, exceeds all else and leaves me hardly a moment of rest. I cannot wait. I am already advanced in years. Fate will, perhaps, break me in the middle of my work, and the Babylonian tower will remain crudely unfinished. At least let the people say it was daringly conceived, and if I live, let God preserve my forces to the end.[6]

Perhaps Rod is just in saying that the "pyramid" and the "Babylonian tower" are not metaphors without some hyperbolism, particularly if one considers the real dimensions of the "foundation" laid for the "pyramid" and the "tower":

The administration of the duchy of Weimar, the direction of the Amateurs' Theater, the literary teas with the Dowager Duchess, manuscripts so readily abandoned, that even their author had difficulty in taking them seriously. Little enough indeed, a narrow foundation on which there stood the partly constructed walls, giving no promise of an imposing monument.[7]

Goethe, who was a Councillor, a Minister of War, and a Minister of Finances, was, despite his own assertions, not particularly interested

[4] *Complete Writings of Walt Whitman* (New York-London, 1902), VI, 39.

[5] See Albert Bielschowsky, *The Life of Goethe* (New York-London, 1907), II, 411.

[6] *Goethes Briefe*, herausgegeben von E. von der Hellen (Stuttgart-Berlin, 1902), II, 30-31; quoted by Edouard Rod in *Essai sur Goethe* (Lausanne, 1898), pp. 167-170.

[7] E. Rod, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

in the affairs of the state. He was mostly absorbed in the reconstruction of the castle, in the establishment of a park on the shores of the Ilm, in the mines of Ilmenau, and in various excursions. These "very important" tasks, on the one hand, and, on the other, the poet's confidence that genius (I am quoting him here) never abandons him, that the Muses and Graces embellish his life with crowns of felicity, created quite a harmonious existence. Goethe's life became even more pleasant when, after his famous Italian journey, he altered the foundations of his "pyramid." He presented his resignation to Charles August, informing him in his letter that in the solitude of Italy he had found himself, but only as an artist. The kind duke, who cherished the same exalted opinion of his minister, released him from his duties but did not deprive him of his title of Councillor or his annual salary of 1800 thalers.[8] Goethe remained, as he was then characterized, the second or even the first person in the duchy. This characterization implied that the alternative first or second person was the duke, Charles August. This was not quite correct. Certainly in the small power represented by the duchy of Weimar Goethe was a great power to be considered by the other great powers, and not only literary ones like Byron, Mickiewicz, or Pushkin, but also great political powers, like Alexander I and Napoleon. The mistake in the characterization of Goethe as first or second person in the duchy occurred because the actual first person was ignored. This was, I might call her, the ambassadress of "All Russia," the young heiress to the Duchy of Weimar, Maria Pavlovna, a Russian grand duchess, daughter of Paul I and sister of two successive emperors, Alexander I and Nicholas I.

When Maria Pavlovna arrived in Weimar, it was with a dowry packed in eighty carriages, representing a fortune far above the budget for the entire duchy for several years. In 1829 Goethe had an opportunity to see "die sämmtlichen Schätze des Trousseaux" and exclaimed: "It is a picture out of *A Thousand and One Nights.*"[9]

Whether we listen to the German biographers who have only recently been forced to admit the significance of Russian wealth in Weimar and naturally tend to minimize it, or whether we accept the viewpoint of the Russians who magnify its importance, we cannot but consider the Russian influence to have been considerable. Rudolph Yagoditsch in his book published in 1932, *Goethe und seine russischen Zeitgenossen,* says:

> The bountiful means, which she [Maria Pavlovna] received from the Empress Mother and her Imperial brothers, transferred to Weimar something of the brilliance and luxury of the Petersburg court ... Russian riches in Weimar went

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.

[9] See S. Durylin, "Russkie pisateli u Goethe v Vejmare," *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo,* IV-VI (1932), 131-132.

particularly to the benefit of the artistic and scientific projects of Goethe. Constant subventions for the Weimar Library and its collections, for the Freie Zeichenschule, for the Jena University Library, and so on, were forthcoming. Even the establishment and adornment of the Weimar Park—Goethe's favorite project—was made possible by the support of "Her Imperial Highness."[10]

The recent Russian historian, Durylin, has written:

Only special work based on the Weimar and Petersburg archives could reveal in all completeness the Russian feudal foundations of Weimar's cultural well-being ... The rain of gold which began to fall with the arrival of Maria Pavlovna was heavy and continuous. This rain of gold, originating from Russian serfdom, remains an important and almost uninvestigated aspect of Goethe's biography.[11]

There can be no doubt that these facts had some effect on Goethe's attitude not only toward the imperial grand duchess, but toward Russia.

Goethe's biographer Bielschowsky explains Weimar's survival and expansion following the Congress of Vienna as a reward for the patriotism shown and the heavy losses sustained by the country during the war.[12] But I am inclined to agree with Durylin, who maintains that this explanation is probably not quite correct. Charles August frequently changed sides from Napoleon to Alexander, and at the Congress of Vienna it was not his merits that were considered but the relationship between Alexander, "whose scissors were to cut the map of Europe," and Maria Pavlovna, who was the wife of the heir to the Weimar throne. Goethe had every reason to call Maria Pavlovna "the kind angel" of the country and to extoll her benefactions.[13]

The story of the relationships which I have indicated thus far should serve as an introduction to my main subject. Let me insert now the famous episode of Goethe's *rencontre* with Napoleon. Goethe has given us only an incomplete report of this meeting. He even refused to give Eckermann some of the details, and we know of them only from Chancellor von Müller.[14] The talk between the two men has usually been described in the most touching tones.[15] Napoleon appears as one of the followers of Goethe, and their conversation touched on *Werther*. Apparently he had read *Werther* seven times and carried the book with him into Egypt. What a picture! In the shadow of the pyramids and facing the Sphinx, the conqueror of the world reading *Werther!* One may imagine how pleased Goethe was with all this. But there was more than mere tribute during their talk together. Goethe's imperial admirer pointed out that Werther's suicide should have been motivated only

[10] Quoted by Durylin, *loc. cit.*, p. 134 (taken from Yagoditsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-351).
[11] Durylin, *loc. cit.*, p. 138.
[12] Bielschowsky, *op. cit.*, III, 136.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 134.
[14] See Rod, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
[15] See Bielschowsky, *op. cit.*, II, chap. 14.

by emotional causes and that Goethe had weakened the impression of his death by including another motive—offended ambition. One may share Rod's supposition that Goethe must have felt the truth of this criticism, for he kept silent about it. Rod points out that, despite Eckermann's insistence in trying to draw out of Goethe the essence of Napoleon's critical remarks, Goethe avoided these insidious questions, and turned the conversation to other subjects. Eckermann's talk with Goethe on January 2, 1824 confirms Rod's assertion entirely.[16]

How different by comparison with this meeting of "the two greatest men of Europe, both world conquerors, both men of superhuman powers," was the meeting of Goethe, the one "endowed with a divine sense of proportion" (I am quoting Bielschowsky[17]), and Alexander! On September 26, 1808, Goethe was presented to Alexander, and noted in his diary: "Dinner at the palace. A large table. Later I was introduced to the Emperor by the Duke. The Emperor courteously asked me about Wieland."[18] What a *gaffe*! Here is Napoleon reading *Werther* in the shadow of the pyramids, on one hand, and Alexander daring to talk to Goethe about Wieland, on the other. This might be construed either as an insult or as proof of Alexander's ignorance—he had probably not read *Werther*. On October 6, at a ball in the Belvedere, Napoleon, who was having a long talk with Wieland and Goethe about Tacitus and Christianity, suddenly interrupted the conversation and said to the two poets: "Excuse me, but we are not here to talk about Tacitus. See how charmingly Emperor Alexander dances."[19] This must have been quite a satisfaction to the offended Goethe. He could recognize Alexander's preference for such pursuits as the basis for his strange behavior. There was also additional satisfaction, for on the very same day that Napoleon conferred on him the Order of the Legion of Honor, Goethe returned home to find that he had received from Alexander the Order of Saint Anna with its accompanying broad ribbon and diamond star. Thenceforth the star was almost always pinned on Goethe. Durylin has pointed out that it is as difficult to find a single portrait of Goethe minus some decoration as it is to find a portrait of Pushkin in the uniform of the *kamer-junker* of the Russian imperial court.[20]

I cannot cite here all the details of Goethe's relations with Russian empresses, like Elizabeth Alexeevna, the wife of Alexander I, Maria Fedorovna, the mother of Alexander, or Alexandra Fedorovna, the wife of Nicholas I and famous for her admiration of *Werther*, or of

[16] Edouard Rod, *op cit.*, pp. 104-106. See also Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, besorgt von H. T. Krober (Potsdam, 1920), II, 454-458.
[17] Bielschowsky, *op. cit.*, II, 411.
[18] See Durylin, *loc. cit.*, p. 146.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 149.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 150.

Goethe's relations with Nicholas I. Nor is it feasible to enumerate the *Festlieder, Gastlieder, Brautlieder, Albumblätter* which came from his pen, or the *Festzüge* and *Maskenzüge* in which he participated.

These facts are, however, significant, since they show that Goethe's attitude to Russia could not but have been deeply affected by his relations with the Russian court, which also determined his attitude toward Poland. When in 1830-31 the whole of Germany, together with Europe, resounded with the hundreds of songs and poems written by the best German poets in praise of Poland's fight for independence and then lamenting her defeat, Goethe remained silent. I have been told that this silence should be explained by the fact that Goethe was a man of the eighteenth century, a century devoid of nationalism and patriotism in the modern sense of these words. Against the background of Durylin's revelations, the picture has changed. The Jupiter of Weimar as a friend of Nicholas I, the Jupiter of Petersburg, could hardly be a friend to the rebellious Prometheus.[21]

In 1828 the Society of Lovers of Wisdom, a group of young Russians, great admirers of Goethe, who were devoted to abstract German philosophy and thereby removed from the tumult of political events, received a letter from Goethe. This occurred only two years after the Decembrist Insurrection in which the cream of Russian society perished in a fruitless revolt against autocracy. Those who survived, escaping execution or exile to Siberia, were plunged into a mournful lethargy. But Goethe found only the following advice to convey to his young Russian admirers:

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[21] Perhaps the Poles had special reasons not to be particularly enthusiastic about Goethe. He never showed any interest or sympathy for Poland. His first mention of Poland occurs in his comedy *Die Mitschuldigen* (1768), and reveals that he sympathized with Russia. Toward the end of his life he defended the ban imposed by the Prussian government on Raumer's book, *Der Untergang Polens*, with the following statement: "To reveal at the present time Prussia's former mode of dealing with Poland and to put it in a bad light can only do harm and inflame passions. I set myself on a higher plane than that of ordinary, dull, moralistic politicians. I say plainly: no king keeps his word, no king *can* keep his word; he must always give in to the dictates of circumstance. The Poles would have perished anyway—after their whole confused manner of thinking, they would have had to perish. And was Prussia to come out of it all with empty hands while Russia and Austria were seizing what they wanted? It is only we poor Philistines—not the greatest powers of the earth—that are duty bound to the opposite course of action." Quoted by Roman Pilat in his review of Karpeles' book, *Goethe in Polen*, in *Kwartalnik historyczny*, IV (1890), 538. Polish scholars have noted these attitudes, but even they were unaware of all the details. As for the romantic poets, Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasiński, they knew nothing of Goethe's political position with regard to Poland. I emphasize this in order to make clear that the reaction of the Polish romantics toward Goethe was devoid of any national prejudices. The Poles never judged him on the basis of his feelings toward Poland. They judged him solely on the basis of his poetry; but nevertheless they all agreed that he was a man "without heart."

Continue with the same moderation as heretofore. Transfer to your compatriots that which is of immediate use to them. Always bearing in mind the monarch and his wise, benevolent intentions, you, on your part, must achieve what is your task. That which is possible for an honest man is useful. That which is understandable to the simple, will bear fruit. Let the approval of your heart, together with the approval of your superiors, serve always as your incentive and reward.[22]

This letter, against the background of the execution of the Decembrists personally ordered by Nicholas I, was hardly an inspiring message from the great Olympian to Russian youth.

As I have said, there were very few real admirers of Goethe among the Russians. Strangely enough, almost everyone, even Turgenev, experienced a kind of crisis with regard to the problem of accepting or rejecting Goethe. Turgenev knew *Faust* by heart, and considered it to be the most complete expression of the epoch which separated the Middle Ages from the modern age. But the same Turgenev called Faust an egoist and explained his own youthful enthusiasm for *Faust* as a trait of his romanticism.[23] It is true that in the turmoil of the ideological fight around Goethe there were several poets who paid the highest tribute to him, but always to Goethe the poet. Boratynsky's beautiful poem, "On Goethe's Death," praises in the most solemn words the universal wisdom of the venerable poet. Tiutchev in his commemorative poem calls Goethe "the best leaf on the exalted human tree." There was also the partly German Fet who was profoundly influenced by Goethe and for whom Goethe remained "the object of immutable admiration and delight." Stankevich's and Bakunin's infatuation with Goethe should be mentioned, too, but the same Bakunin eventually said that "the more exalted the ideal world of a German is, the more ugly and banal are his life and activity in reality."[24]

However, of those who might be considered Russian ideologists, almost everyone began with enthusiastic admiration for the poet but ended with a drastic re-evaluation. The most characteristic case is that of Küchelbecker, who in 1838, just at the apogee of Goethe's cult in the circle of Russian idealists, turned away from the object of his adoration to whose feet he claimed to have brought all of Russia. He wrote: "I gave them a golden calf. They are still worshipping it and singing hymns, one more foolish than the next. But I no longer see a god in the calf."[25]

In some cases this change might be explained by the personal philosophical evolution through which Goethe's judges passed. Such was

[22] Quoted by L. Averbakh in "O velikom genii i uzkom filistere," *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, IV-VI, 21.

[23] See Žirmunskij, *op. cit.*, pp. 357-367.

[24] Mikhail Bakunin, *Gosudarstvennost' i anarxija* (Leningrad, 1919), pp. 230-231; see also Žirmunskij, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

[25] Quoted by Žirmunskij, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

the case of the Russian literary critic, Belinsky. In the period of his interest in Schelling, Fichte, and Hegel, from 1834 to 1840, Belinsky was happy to oppose Goethe's objective art to Schiller's subjectivism, Goethe's realism to romanticism; as one who accepted Hegel's formula of "the rational reality," he rejected Schiller's meanderings outside reality. Belinsky often used Hegel's term *Schönseeligkeit* and voiced his irritation with Schiller's idealistic phraseology.[26] But as early as the 1840s his attitude changed radically. Belinsky now attacked Goethe's formula, "Ich singe wie der Vogel singt," which was universally accepted as a declaration for pure art, and which of course was not original with Goethe. For Belinsky this formula was now unacceptable, and he stated: "Only a bird sings because it is solely inclined to do so, without regard for the sorrows or joys of its species . . . And how bitter it is to think that among men, who at birth were anointed from on high with the chrism of inspiration, one finds birds . . ."[27] This particular point becomes the leitmotif of Belinsky's criticism. He attacks Goethe's Olympian, impassive seclusion and terms his aspiration to sing like a bird " a pitiful Ovidian metamorphosis."[28] He not only attacks "art for art's sake," but upholds Schiller's generosity as opposed to Goethe's egoism. In April 1841, he wrote:

> Goethe is great as an artist, but disgusting as a personality . . . He who likes everything, likes nothing, because everything borders on nothing. As Goethe loved everything from an angel in Heaven or a child on earth to a worm in the sea, he did not love anything. Zhukovsky once said of him, without realizing what a condemnation his appraisal contained, that in the universe Goethe perceived all, but yielded to nothing.[29]

There is no denying that Menzel's iconoclastic campaign played its role in Belinsky's change of heart. The Russians read Menzel in a translation of 1837. They read the eloquent pages disclosing Goethe's indifference toward events of universal history, his irritation because they disrupted the sweet moments of his poetical enjoyment, his indifference toward the fate of his own country, his banal relations with Napoleon, and the selfish quietism that permitted him to study Chinese literature amidst the turmoil of events in Germany after Napoleon's fall, "as he relates himself with self-satisfaction."[30]

Even more pointed than Belinsky in his judgments of Goethe was Herzen, undoubtedly one of the most attractive of all Russian personalities. He had known Goethe's works since childhood and had often

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[26] *Ibid.*, p. 270.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 317.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 320-322.
[30] *Die deutsche Literatur* von Wolfgang Menzel, zweite vermehrte Auflage (Stuttgart, 1836), III, 334-346, quoted by Zirmunskij, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

wept over *Werther*. In his youth he admired Goethe more consciously, and the poet's writings finally became his constant companions. There are hundreds of quotations from Goethe in Herzen, such as his remark about America, or about Western civilization, which Goethe compared to a decomposing fish ("Die Welt geht auseinander wie ein fauler Fisch, wir wollen sie nicht balsamieren"), and the famous line, "Der Mensch ist nicht geboren frei zu sein."[31]

However, in 1834 Herzen launched a fight against Goethe. While in prison he wrote a story which he first called *The German Traveler* and then *The First Meeting*. Goethe appears in it several times and gradually Herzen strengthens his negative characterization of the man. Goethe's bourgeois limitations are stressed by an epigraph taken from his comedy, *Die Aufgeregten*, in which he stated: "I cannot judge what good or evil was wrought by the French Revolution. I know only one thing—because of it I wore out several extra pairs of socks this last winter." Goethe appears as a poet guided by political servility, the author of occasional court pieces written for arrivals, departures, childbirths, and convalescences of the nobility; he becomes the poet of insincerity, mystification, and egoism. One episode in the story is charming, although filled with bitter animosity toward Goethe. Herzen writes:

> When Goethe returned from Italy, he was once at a large and, naturally, aristocratic gathering. There he was collecting praise and dispensing his stories, filled with the immense importance of all of his words and actions. There was a man present, sitting off by himself in a corner meditating. For a long time he gazed attentively at Goethe with blue eyes in which there was clearly written that he was not of this earth and that his soul longed for another world, created out of a sacred dream and pure inspiration. He liked Goethe for his *Werther* and *Goetz von Berlichingen*. He had come expressly to see Goethe and make his acquaintance. This unknown finally arose and said: "He and I shall never agree!" And do you know who he was? It was Schiller![32]

This ideological juxtaposition of Schiller and Goethe echoes the views of Heine, which he developed in his *Die romantische Schule*. Mention has already been made of W. Menzel, whose *Die deutsche Literatur* (1828) opened an ideological fight against Goethe. No less violent was Ludwig Boerne (*Aus meinem Tagebuche*), for whom Goethe was a servant of "des bürgerlichen Adels" whose principle was "das zahme Dienen trotzigen Herren." Boerne calls him a "rhymed lackey," a "Kleinstadter," a "coward philistine." There is no need to explain that Herzen uses Schiller in his short story as an ideological symbol. Herzen also wrote that Goethe perceived the pettiness of his age but could not rise above it.

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[31] *Ibid.*, p. 336.

[32] Quoted by Žirmunskij, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

I have already said that I am prepared to kneel before the creater of *Faust*, but just as ready to ignore the Privy Councilor who writes comedies on the day of the Battle of Leipzig, who is not preoccupied with the biography of mankind because he is constantly too busy with his own biography . . . I admire the genius of this man, but I cannot love him.[33]

Herzen transports the Jupiter from his Olympus down to a level where his real traits are more discernible, and warns that the cult of Goethe is a dangerous one. He writes:

How many professors in Germany were quietly reading their scholastic nonsense at the time of the Napoleonic drama? How many were quietly checking the location of Auerstädt and Wagram on the map with the same curious detachment with which they followed the wanderings of Ulysses on another map?[34]

Similar views have been expressed by Russians with no romantic alliances. Pisarev, the founder of Russian materialism, whom one would least have suspected of Christianity and spirituality, stated:

The world of personal feelings was not a refuge, but a cathedral for him, a place where he could abide with the firm conviction that a more beautiful or holier spot did not exist in the world. In order to see in himself a glorious cathedral and in the world around a dirty market-place, in order to forget thereby the solidarity of his own ego with the surrounding foolishness and sufferings of other people, he was systematically compelled to undermine and assuage his critical sense with the beauty of selected phrases. Petty thoughts and petty feelings had to be elevated to a pearl of creation. Goethe carried out this trick, and such tricks are to date considered to be the height of art . . .[35]

It is worth while to quote Tolstoy's opinion of Goethe, especially since there were many points in common between these two long and rich lives. "I am reading Goethe," he wrote in his diary of 1896, "and I see all the evil influence of this petty, bourgeois, egotistical man on the generation to which I belong, particularly on poor Turgenev with his admiration for *Faust*."[36]

What is especially significant in the Russian opinions cited is that, where Goethe's admirers saw impossible superiority, divine greatness, they disclose and stress inferiority. One cannot but be amazed by the vehemence of this criticism. After all, why should Herzen have been so deeply indignant about Goethe? And Herzen was not alone. He was the spokesman of many. His feelings were shared by his Russian contemporaries, and would certainly have been shared, had they been known, by the Poles. Their refutation of Goethe was also essentially ideological.

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[33] *Ibid.*, p. 343.

[34] A. J. Gercena, "Dilettantism v nauk," *Sočinenija*, I (1875), 336.

[35] Dmitrij Pisarev, "Realisty," *Sočinenija* (1909), IV, 51-52.

[36] M. Čistjakova, "Tolstoy i Goethe," *Zven'ja*, II, 125; in 1905 Tolstoy admitted that in his youth he admired Goethe's "abominable dramas," *ibid.*, p. 128.

There exists a short but excellent essay written by Mickiewicz in his early years, probably in 1826, when he was in Moscow. In this essay, entitled *Goethe and Byron*,[37] Mickiewicz gives a significant enumeration of what he considers the most important facts about Goethe: first, that Goethe was endowed with a genius equal to the demands of the epoch and under circumstances particularly favorable to its development; second, that Goethe was a child of parents of no particular political importance and that he was born in a free city whose citizens sided in turn with the French or the Prussians, and was, therefore, free from any strong patriotic feelings; third, that his life was quiet and happy, his passions were lively but not violent, and his relationships never unduly upset him. In other words, Goethe never knew any great misfortunes or experienced any painful losses.

We are fortunate to have records of the meeting of Mickiewicz and Goethe at Weimar. The Polish record was written by Odyniec who accompanied Mickiewicz on the visit; the German record comes from the poet, Holtei, who was also present. In Mickiewicz, as it happens, there is only one reference to the entire episode.

Odyniec has described the visit in some fifty pages. They spent thirteen days in Weimar and had the opportunity of seeing Goethe on several occasions. One day Mickiewicz and Odyniec went to see *Faust* at the Weimar Theater. During their walk from the theater to Goethe's house, where they were to spend the evening at a big reception, Odyniec attempted to get some comment from Mickiewicz, and was quite irritated with the poet's silence. Later, Goethe made similar inquiries, but Mickiewicz only praised some particulars, making no comment on the play in general.[38]

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[37] In 1834, the Polish Schlegel, Kazimierz Brodziński, published a short but excellent article on Goethe in which he stressed Goethe's aestheticism, "his indifference and inconsiderateness toward anything which did not concern him as an artist." He wrote: "The one who might seek more from him than from an artist would have much to object to from the human and moral point of view... In general, the deep and pentrating mind of Goethe would have contributed much more to the revival of principles uprooted by the philosophy of the eighteenth century and of extinguished feelings, if he had considered his art as a means to that end. But it was precisely after him that the enthusiasts began to declare that art and morality are two separate things and that art should never be utilized as a means. People prefer singularity and novelty to greatness, and Goethe knew that well." Brodziński ended his reserved, unemotional article with the following statement: "The letters of Goethe and Schiller are interesting. From them we see how these two men, acting calmly, gave a general direction to German literature. One is struck by the beautiful and elevated character of Schiller alongside of Goethe's knowledge of the world, his active curiosity and wit. As much as Schiller ardently aspired to the heights, so much did Goethe quietly and penetratingly embrace space. Where Goethe might teach, Schiller's heart gives much." *Pisma Estetyczno-krytyczne* (Warsaw, 1834), II, 274-279.

[38] A. Odyniec, *Listy z podróży*, Bibl. Nar., Serja 1, no. 117, pp. 36-89; also K. von Holtei, *Vierzig Jahre* (1862), VI, 138-146.

The conclusion is obvious. The meeting with Goethe left Mickiewicz cold. It could not have been otherwise. The two men were so different, almost conflicting in the essence of their natures and ideologies. There was no common language between them. Goetheism, as Rod has justly defined it in his study on Goethe, is primarily intelligence, comprehension. This in itself would not have created an obstacle between Goethe and Mickiewicz, except that Goethe's intelligence and comprehension are confined to that which secures pleasure. It is a kind of dilettantism, and as such is hedonistic. Everything opposed to its concept of harmony is rejected. That is why Goethe rejected suffering, which he never comprehended. And though he began his *Faust* with the assertion, contrary to the Gospel, that first there was the deed and then the word, he himself was not a poet of action. Heine said of him: "His works are great, but they will never give birth to any deed."[39]

From his earliest days Goethe firmly established a stronghold of egotism, and never accepted anything which might disturb his personal existence or equilibrium. Let me quote some facts and some confessions. In 1830 he said to Chancellor von Müller: "When I see that people write to me for their own sake and desire something for themselves, I consider that it is not my concern. If, on the contrary, they write in my favor and address things to me that are of interest or give me an opportunity to progress, then I answer them."[40]

Just as Goethe did not accept suffering, he did not accept heroism. He could see no advantage in struggling against obstacles. The struggle against obstacles, the suffering and heroism involved in this struggle, have always constituted essential elements of every philosophical system which is concerned with ethics and with the problem of the moral perfecting of the human personality. But for Goethe an obstacle was a nuisance, a senseless block, and heroism was foreign to his cult of personal comfort. His rejection of the redeeming beauty of the Cross went far. In his famous "Venetian Epigram" he stated: "I abhor like the venom of a serpent four things in the world: tobacco, bed-bugs, garlic, and the Cross!"[41] But he did not apply this abhorrence to any cross or decoration. "I confess that a small cross of honor on a suit is a pleasant object, but the horrible wooden cross of torment is the most hideous

[39] H. Heine, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Elster, V, 251-254.

[40] *Goethes Unterhaltungen mit dem Kanzler Friederich von Müller*, herausgegeben von C. A. H. Burkhardt (Stuttgart, 1898), p. 234. Quoted by Robert Harcourt in *Goethe et l'art de vivre* (Paris, 1935), pp. 20-21.

[41] "Vieles kann ich ertragen. Die meisten beschwerlichen Dinge
Duld ich mit ruhigem Mut, wie es ein Gott mir gebeut.
Wenige sind mir jedoch wie Gift und Schlange zuwider,
Viere: Rauch des Tabaks, Wanzen und Knoblauch und †"
("Venezianische Epigramme")

picture under the sun; a sensible man should not project its silhouette in the sky."[42]

In contrast to Goethe, during his whole life Mickiewicz was devoted precisely to the three enumerated elements of moral philosophy—struggle, suffering, heroism. There are numerous illustrations, but I would like first to complete the list of moral conflicts between him and Goethe. Let us take, for instance, patriotism. When in 1771 J. von Sonnenfels published his book, *Über die Liebe des Vaterlands,* Goethe followed with an article in which he wrote: "If we find a place in the world where we and our belongings may rest, a field which will nourish us, a roof to shelter us, do we not have a fatherland there? Have not thousands and thousands of men these things in every state? Let God preserve us from Roman patriotism."[43]

One may say, perhaps, that the fight for national independence immunized the Poles against bourgeois philistinism and secured to them a special conception of personal dignity which partially compensated for their national enslavement. It is possible to consider Goethe (and this is the way his admirers interpret him) as a personality so potent and rich that he does not require heterogeneous moral supports. From this point of view the men who worship the Cross and admire unredeemed heroism, who are ready to sacrifice themselves for some superior ideal, such as fatherland, are inferior beings. But the problem is more complicated, because we are not concerned here with average people, nor are we trying to distinguish between those who are strong enough to live by themselves and those who require external values to which they may anchor their own moral life. Here we are juxtaposing two great men, and it seems to me that Mickiewicz was endowed with such natural, organic elements of power, attractiveness, and personal prestige that it would have been exceedingly easy for him to follow a path of personal conquests and triumphs. But no! He bowed his head. He voluntarily adopted an attitude of humility, believing that this alone could dignify and enrich him. This attitude is not necessarily a Christian one, though it was in Mickiewicz's case. Disinterested sacrifice, readiness for heroism, love of obstacle, generosity, preference for giving rather than receiving—these are traits which characterize, above all, the aristocratic being, and it is by these traits that such individuals are distinguished from what we usually call bourgeois philistines.

Among all the Russian and Polish poets, perhaps the one who is most Goethean is Pushkin. About him has been said exactly what was said

[42] See *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und Zelter in den Jahren 1796-1832,* herausgegeben von Dr. F. W. Riemer (Berlin, 1834), VI, 197. Quoted by Harcourt, *op. cit.,* pp. 163-164.

[43] Rod, *op. cit.,* pp. 79-80.

about Goethe—he was first of all a poet. In his artistic nature we find the same subtle and rich reactions to all phenomena of the world as in Goethe. But, as abstract and pure a poet as Pushkin may be, his moral sense is ever vigilant. And there remain the special circumstances of his death. His death has become part of the great Russian legend called Pushkin. It has bound people to the poet because under certain tragic conditions he was ready to sacrifice his life for that which he held superior to it—his honor. Though this has nothing to do with his poetry, it has brought warmth to the memory of the man, preserved in the hearts of his compatriots. Goethe did say once: "Women do not understand anything of the conflicts of men. The reason is that, like Jews, they are ignorant of *le point d'honneur*."[44] But can the historical hero whom Goethe chose in *Goetz von Berlichingen* to serve as an illustration of honor, as the Germans comprehend it, stand as a shining example?[45]

To Odyniec, Mickiewicz gave the following resumé of his impressions of the trip to Germany: "In Hamburg—beefsteak, in Bonn—potatoes, in Weimar—Goethe."[46] This formula is certainly disconcerting, but one should not be too astonished by the coolness of Mickiewicz's feeling for Goethe. Though in his poetry he was more closely connected than Pushkin with Goethe, ideologically he was farther removed.

I have already mentioned the existence of a Polish *Werther*, a Polish *Faust*, and a Polish *Hermann und Dorothea*. But the Polish *Werther* lost its philosophic reflectiveness and became a cry of passion, the Polish *Faust* expressed the identification of the poet with the sufferings of millions, and the pale idyll of bourgeois life in *Hermann und Dorothea* became in *Pan Tadeusz* a colorful fresco of Polish nature and society, presented with Homeric scope.

The most important quality, however, which distinguishes Mickiewicz from Goethe is the resignation imposed by the poet upon himself. At the culmination in the development of his personality Mickiewicz was prepared to reduce the universal possibilities of his art and his individual happiness for the sake of his nation. But through an act of polarization he attained a new universalism. The route to it was through solidarity with human suffering. There exists no greater opposition to Goethe than this. The author of *Konrad Wallenrod* and *The Forefathers' Eve* had nothing in common with the Goethe who once (March 6, 1823) said to Chancellor von Müller: "I have not reached my present age to be busy with the history of the world, which is certainly the ab-

[44] Letter to F. W. Riemer, Aug. 1810. See *Goethes Gedanken, aus seinen mündlichen Äusserungen . . . zusammengestellt von Dr. Wilhelm Bode* (Berlin, 1907), I, 207.

[45] In Rod's book there is the detailed story of the historical figure, Goetz von Berlichingen. See Rod, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-101.

[46] J. Kleiner, *Mickiewicz* (Lublin, 1948), II, pt. I, 183.

surdest of all things. Whether a man die, or a nation succumb, I remain quite indifferent."[47]

The pathos of solidarity with the suffering of the national collectivity found an issue precisely in the Cross in Poland, the Cross which Goethe had classified along with tobacco, bedbugs, and garlic. The Christian religion became a theodicy for Polish martyrdom, and the messianic conception of Poland as the Christ of nations was not at all an expression of pretentious and ridiculous national ambition or glorification, but a genuine expression of grief and despair, of the search for a religious justification of sufferings which reason could neither explain nor accept.

It is exactly this road that was followed by Krasiński, the aristocrat and aristophile, who denied his aristocratic hero in *The Undivine Comedy* because of his lack of heart, and who led his other hero, Iridion, the avenger of mutilated Greece, to resignation. Although in the character Masinissa in *Iridion* one may find reminiscences of Mephistopheles, Krasiński rejects Goethe too for lack of heart. This constitutes the poet's first refutation. The second is for the sake of will and deed. This is what he wrote to his mistress, Countess Delfina Potocka, about a poem he was considering, which was to be an addition to the *The Undivine Comedy*:

> I recently read you an analysis of the second part of *Faust*. You observed that this poem embraces the history and fate of all of mankind, but in the form of an idea, in the form of the development of art.The Greek Helen and romantic poetry are the main actors there. The deeds of all centuries are expressed through the destiny of art. Mankind is literature there! My conception will be different. If this poem, the nucleus of which was born in my head in your honor, is ever realized, it will be a poem of will and deed, not art. In it will and deed will be transferred into the sphere of art, but this will not be art created out of art, as in Goethe.[48]

No different were Slowacki's conceptions. To individual disharmony Slowacki opposed universal disharmony and showed that in the heart one might accept universal suffering and that infinite sorrow does not stem from a sick soul, as in Werther's case, but from the immensity of the real universal suffering. The consolation offered in *Anhelli* is based on the belief that human suffering and all sacrifice, though never rewarded, serve humanity as they enrich the spiritual content of the world. There is something in these dreams of Polish minds which makes me think of Dostoevsky's assertion that there is nothing more beautiful than an aristocrat in democracy, since such an aristocrat represents an act of voluntary sacrifice.

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[47] *Goethes Unterhaltungen mit dem Kanzler F. von Müller*, p. 214.

[48] Quoted by J. Kleiner in *Zygmunt Krasiński, Dzieje i myśli* (Lwow, 1912), pp. 376-377.

Against the background of these ideas, what impression does the following aphorism of Goethe create?

> Much is said about aristocracy and democracy, but it is a simple thing: in our youth when we have nothing and when we do not know how to appreciate quiet possession, we are democrats. But if, in a long life, we accumulate property, then we desire that it not only be preserved to us, but that our children and grandchildren may have an untroubled use of their heritage. This is why toward old age all of us become aristocrats, although we held different views in our youth.[49]

In all fairness to Goethe, however, I should remind the reader of the denial of personal happiness for the sake of service to one's fellow men which appears in *Wilhelm Meister* and in the theme of the girl-mother in *Faust*.

Strangely enough, Goethe has never been discussed as an ideological problem in Poland to the same degree that he was in Russia. The Poles rejected the man in silence. I believe the reader will be no less astonished than I was to find that the best explanation of the Polish rejection was given by a Russian, Herzen, in his *Notes of a Certain Young Man*. Herzen's story is a variant of the first chapters of his famous autobiography, *My Past and Thoughts;* but, whereas the autobiography is written in the form of memoirs, the *Notes of a Certain Young Man* is a short story in which Herzen deals with historical facts through fictional figures and means. It is concerned with the intellectual and moral development of a young Russian idealist; there is no doubt that Herzen endowed his hero with his own background of reading and his own moral attitudes. The author emphasizes the particular admiration of the hero in his youth for Schiller and also his fear of Goethe. Goethe offended him by his indifference, his lack of sympathy, for he could not then comprehend Goethe's sympathy with the universe at large. Considerably later Herzen's hero understands and begins to admire Goethe.

The story also deals with Russian provincial life. With a satirical touch Herzen emphasizes the unbreakable power of philistinism. The dull, vulgar, banal life of a provincial town is immutable precisely because its ruling principle is selfishness. That selfishness becomes an entrenchment against the greatest of world events. Each day the commonplace ceremonies of self-satisfied egoists continue. Only because it is local, the most trivial event becomes a sensation. And always, the most terrifying trait of this life is its stability. It consists of permanently repeated, small routine events which lack any wider significance. A Lisbon earthquake, an invasion of Napoleon, a new poem of Goethe—exclaims Herzen with indignation—can occur and will not provoke any reaction among these self-centered, self-satisfied, self-confident people.

[49] Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, besorgt von Hans T. Kroeber (Potsdam, 1920), I, 221-222.

It is impossible not to mention here Goethe's diary of 1806, the year of the battle of Jena. On August 7 he wrote: "A discussion took place on the coachman's box between the coachman and the valet which excited us more than the disruption of the Holy Roman Empire."[50] And in 1813, several days after the battle of Leipzig, during the turmoil of the world, he wrote to his editor, Cotta: "You will certainly learn with pleasure that the monster [this is a reference to the war] passed by very near to me and my people without inflicting any discomfort on us. Would you investigate the possibilities of a cheap and pocket-size edition of *Hermann und Dorothea?*"[51]

Herzen's little provincial town is no more self-centered than the great Olympian. There is irony in the fact that Herzen mentions a new poem of Goethe in context with the Lisbon earthquake and the Napoleonic invasion. But what is of special significance in Herzen's story is that his ideological refutation of Goethe is put into the mouth of a Pole. We learn that in the neighborhood of the dull, provincial town there is a strange, rather eccentric landlord whose main preoccupation is to improve the conditions of life for his peasants. Naturally, all the people in the town are against him, and he holds no communication with them except for a physician, who is the only intelligent man among them. Herzen's young idealist decides to see the man and the physician conducts him there. A talk about Goethe ensues. This landlord is the Pole, a man tired of life, one who has lost all illusions. He is somber, ironic, and pessimistic. It is unnecessary to quote Herzen exactly for the details of the landlord's portrait of Goethe. The Russian idealist is shocked. He cannot understand the Pole's attitude, and this is the answer he receives:

> There is only one possible explanation. Either you think I am lying—in which case there are no documents to convince you of the contrary—or you believe me, and in that case you have only yourself to blame if the real Goethe doesn't resemble the one you have built for yourself. All dreamers are unconditionally attracted by authorities, and they create in their minds fantastically great men . . . Lavater, reading Goethe, built an image of his personality in accord with his own theories, and when he saw the man, he almost wept out of disappointment . . .[52]

Herzen offers a short commentary on his Polish character. I quote:

> In [the landlord] skepticism prevails *d'une existence manquée*. It is not the skepticism either of the Ancients or of Hume, but the skepticism of a life ruined

[50] *Aus Goethes Tagebücher*, ausgewählt und eingeleitet von H. G. Graf (Leipzig, 1908), p. 39. See Harcourt, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

[51] *Goethes Briefe*, herausgegeben von Eduard von der Hellen (Stuttgart-Berlin, 1902), p. 158. See Harcourt, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

[52] A. Gercen, *Povesti i Rasskazy* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1934), p. 109. Herzen's Pole is a fictional character; Herzen freely uses historical names and personalities for the expression of his views.

by circumstances, the limitlessly sorrowful view on things of a man whose breast is covered with undeserved wounds, and yet the view of a man full of power (*eine kernhafte Natur*). He is primarily a practical man, least of all an artist. He could consider Goethe from a modest point of view. But how could Goethe have inspired respect for himself? Should Goethe have overwhelmed by his prestige a man who had come to spurn the best hopes of his life through a series of catastrophes? In addition, if we avoid any enthusiasm for authorities, we must admit that the life of German poets and thinkers has been extremely one-sided. I do not know any German biography which is not permeated with philistinism. Despite their cosmopolitan universalism, they lack entirely an element of humaneness, namely, practical life. And though they write much, especially now, about concrete life, the very fact that they write about it and do not live it, proves their abstract character. I beg you, in order to perceive immediately the enormous gap between them and men of life, to recall the biography of Byron... My Pole could not, of course, sympathize with the Germans, because in him there was once developed that part of life which is entirely undeveloped among the Germans, and because he could not reconcile himself with life for other reasons.[53]

There are two essential themes in the story: one is the theme of omnipotent philitinism which is both an expression and a defense of selfishness, and the other is the revolt against it for the sake of some superior values, superior by the very fact that they are suprapersonal.

It has been said that Goethe's wisdom expressed itself in his conception of polarity, but it is probably more as Belinsky thought—that Goethe's polarity means acceptance of everything, and therefore ends practically in passivity. The heroism and sacrifice that so strongly captivated the Polish romantics and the Russian critics of Goethe originate in choice, in a free choice, and choice implies action. In other words, we have two opposite attitudes toward life, that of reconciliation and of irreconciliation.

Let us return to Herzen's Polish figure. In his short story Herzen did not develop this personality further, but in a much later text we find an explanation for the Pole, and indirectly this points up the irreconcilability of the Poles and Goethe. In his memoirs of the famous Polish insurrectionist, Worcell, he says:

Stanislaw Worcell was a saintly man. I have selected this word above all others because it expresses best the main quality of the man. His entire life was a heroic act of selflessness, of unlimited devotion. All that astounds us in the life of saints we find in him, only it is more humane, that is, full of greater love.

Born in luxury and the brilliance of the highest Polish aristocracy, he died in poverty and a democrat. When his native land succumbed under the iron claw of Nicholas, he went into exile, leaving behind all his titles and wealth. I mention the latter fact only in passing, because there is no people on earth that sheds its wealth more readily than the Slavs. It seems to me the Poles have proved this sufficiently. Worcell did not leave Poland to seek a peaceful harbor, like those Romans of the first centuries who denied themselves worldly pleasures and withdrew into isolation so as not to observe the ruin of the world and to create out of

[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 111-113.

their *far niente* a religion of despair. In alien lands his prolonged, tireless work first began—the formation and development of a democratic party of the Polish emigration . . .[54]

These tributes paid by a Russian to a Pole are deeply touching. But in addition Herzen comprehended the essence of the Polish outlook—let us use the excellent German word, *Weltanschauung*. A distinguished Polish scholar, Massonius, confirms Herzen's views in a study entitled "Dualism in Polish Thought." He writes: "While we [Poles] are indifferent to the questions: What exists? How it exists? and Why is it so?, we react passionately to the questions: What is desirable? and What ought to be?" Massonius emphasizes that Poles have never been inclined to abstract speculation, but have rather been attracted by practical philosophy. With them ontology has been replaced by ethics. This is a trait which appeared in Polish literature in the sixteenth century and has not disappeared. Massonius explains that the Polish conception of virtue does not permit recognition of any essential value that is or appears to be exclusively personal, that does not clearly tend toward the general good.[55]

I believe that this explains why Goethe's ideology was not acceptable to the Poles of the romantic generation. As we have seen, the same motives guided the Russian critics of Goethe. Their rejection of Goethe was essentially ethical, although they liked to philosophize more than the Poles did. On one side were Germans who erected a temple, worshipped an idol, and established a cult of certain principles of life in which they discovered the most beautiful expression of human thought and dignity. On the other side were Russians and Poles who saw in this cult, in this religion, and in this adoration an offense to the noblest human obligations, goals, and aspirations. And the more Goethe's worshippers attempted to impose him on others, insisting that he represented the final, the ultimate expression of human wisdom, the more unacceptable he became for the adversaries of this cult, who questioned with Whitman whether any "man or woman was invigorated, made cleaner, grander, sweeter, by his poems," or whether Goethe had "raised any strong voice for freedom and against tyrants."[56] Yet for both sides Goethe became a symbol—a symbol of a philosophic interpretation of life.

For those who admired Schiller and Byron, to be reconciled with Goethe would mean to betray their very spiritual *raison d'être*. And this is why it seems to me that Goethe's irreconcilable critics were per-

[54] A. Gercen, *Byloe i dumy* (Leningrad, 1946), pp. 591-593.

[55] See M. Zdziechowski, "Andrzej Towiański," *Polska Filozofja Narodowa* (Krakow, 1921), pp. 141-142.

[56] Whitman, *op. cit.*, VI, 113-114.

haps more human than Goethe and in a way closer to a universalistic conception of life, though this conception derived from anthropocentrism. And thus we return to "Ecce homo!"

It has often been said that Goethe was divine. But for this reason he was also nonhuman in the eyes of his adversaries. There is no doubt that in Goethe they found the greatest opposition to Christianity; I do not have in mind the confessional or religious aspects of this faith, but its moral aspects—solidarity with human sufferings. Not to accept Goethe meant not to accept the world as it is. To accept Goethe meant to sublimate our own existence, to consider it to be more important than all else. To accept Goethe meant to accept our own happiness at the price of the sufferings of millions. Whether universal happiness is generally attainable is another question, but there is a difference between doubt and the mere acceptance of the present situation for the sake of our own comfort.

It has been said that Goethe was greater than Aeschylus, Sophocles, Dante, and Shakespeare because he was concerned with the impossible. To me the situation seems the reverse. I think that some part of humanity adores men like Schiller, Byron, Mickiewicz, and Tolstoy, although they may only have been modestly concerned with the possible. For who knows what constitutes the possible or the impossible?[57]

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[57] This article is a revision of a lecture delivered on May 29, 1950 in the series organized by the German Department of the University of California commemorating the bicentennial of Goethe's birth. Footnotes have been added to indicate sources. I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Wiktor Weintraub who, while in London, provided me with quotations from Polish publications unavailable in this country.

THREE POEMS ON WHITMAN

FRANK WOOD

IN VIEW of recent Whitman studies such as the biographies of Henry Seidel Canby and Newton Arwin, Professor Allen's *Walt Whitman Handbook*, and Louis Untermeyer's anthology, *The Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman*, one might well pause to consider the case of Whitman as theme in poetry, the manipulation of that theme, and its peculiar relations to the poets who have applied themselves to it.[1] Poems *about* Whitman that are neither parodies nor stylized imitations are rare, but at least three poets in our day have each contributed a poem of merit on the subject. We have the two Whitman odes of Stephen Vincent Benét and García Lorca, and the "Cape Hatteras" section of Hart Crane's *The Bridge*, which is virtually an ode, in the loose generic sense of the moderns, within the structural sequence of the "bridge" mythology.[2]

The poems to be considered are as varied in quality and achievement as the poets individually differed from each other. In temperament and practice Crane stood closer to Lorca than to Benét, whose epic breadth, for all its narrative felicity and historical fullness, belongs to an older and more derivative school of poetry than any at present fashionable. All three poets were contemporary inheritors of a world between two wars and all three absorbed and responded differently to its spiritual climate. Benét harks back to Browning and the dramatic monologue, Lorca and Crane to either the French Symbolists or the old Spanish "deep song" (*cante jondo*) of Andalusia. We should like to know just what specifically induced each in turn to select Whitman as a theme in poetry. Was it the life or the work, or a combination of both, that stimulated their interest? We wish also to inquire concerning the use made of the Whitman theme by each and, finally, the degree of success obtained in transforming the theme into organic poetry.

The problem of Whitman's appeal is perhaps best approached by plac-

[1] Henry Seidel Canby, *Walt Whitman. An American* (Boston, 1943); Newton Arwin, *Whitman* (New York, 1938); Gay Wilson Allen, *Walt Whitman Handbook* (Chicago, 1946); Louis Untermeyer, *The Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman* (New York, 1950); Charles B. Willard, *Whitman's American Fame* (*The Growth of His Reputation in America after 1892*) (Providence, 1950), chaps. V-VII.

[2] Stephen Vincent Benét, *Burning City* (New York, 1933), pp. 26 ff.; Federico García Lorca, *The Poet in New York and Other Poems*, Spanish text with translation by Rolfe Humphries (New York, 1940), pp. 118 ff.; Hart Crane, *The Collected Poems*, with an Introduction by Waldo Frank (New York, 1933), pp. 31 ff.

ing it in the broader setting of a general comparative critical estimate of his poetic organization. Here, unfortunately, in the American sphere perhaps even more than abroad, critical opinion by and large indicates obfuscation if not actual bedlam. Except for a few specialized studies such as P. M. Jones' "Whitman and Verhaeren," D. W. Schumann's "Enumerative Style and its Significance in Whitman, Rilke, Werfel," and Jean Catel's two excellent volumes, practically nothing has been done to assess Whitman's influence on modern poetry, directly or indirectly—as, for example, his relationship to the *unanimistes* or to German writers like Lersch and Zweig, not to mention a whole group of American poets, beginning with the minor socialist poets at the turn of the century and ranging through such major ones as Frost, Sandburg, Masters, and Crane.[3]

The reason for this neglect is not difficult to understand. Apart from the risk of inconclusiveness so often the result of forcing parallels too far, the factors in Whitman's case are exceedingly stubborn, complex, and contradictory. Thus René Taupin, for example, states that the free verse of the Imagists owes nothing to Whitman,[4] while F. O. Matthiessen claims that several of the Imagists hailed Whitman as an ancestor.[5] On the strength of her own testimony Amy Lowell apparently belonged in both camps at different times.[6] Again the indebtedness of Hopkins to Whitman is still open to conjecture, despite Hopkins' own deposition to the contrary.[7] Whitman's relationship to the Symbolists, finally, is anything but clear and unequivocal. If some of the French Symbolists apparently recognized in Whitman "une âme sympathique," Taupin, who is anxious to reserve the invention of *vers libre* for the Imagists, holds a different opinion:

> Quant à ce qu'on appelle le vers libre de Whitman, seuls les ignorants peuvent dire que c'est de lui qu'est sorti le vers libre imagiste. Quand on a dit que Whitman a influencé des Français—unanimistes en particulier—et que ces Français à leur

[3] P. M. Jones, "Whitman and Verhaeren," *Aberystwyth Studies* (University College, Wales), II (1914), 71-106, according to Allen an invaluable comparative study; Detlev W. Schumann, "Enumerative Style and its Significance in Whitman, Rilke, Werfel," *Modern Language Quarterly*, III (1942), 171-204; Jean Catel, *Rythme et langage dans la 1ère édition des "Leaves of Grass"* (Paris, 1930); and *Walt Whitman, la naissance du poète* (Paris, 1929), particularly "Deuxième Partie: L'Œuvre," chap. II on Symbolism.

[4] René Taupin, *L'Influence du Symbolisme français sur la poésie américaine (1910-1920)* (Paris, 1929), p. 115: "Nous avons vu pourquoi Whitman ne pouvait rien pour eux [the Imagists], et ce fait est bien prouvé par la technique du vers libre employé par les imagistes, qui ne doit rien à ce poète."

[5] F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance; Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (New York, 1941), p. 579: "Eliot's dissatisfaction with the free-verse of the imagists, several of whom hailed Whitman as an ancestor, led him to develop his own theory that 'poetry is right when it hesitates between two modes . . .'"

[6] Taupin, *op. cit.*, p. 169, *passim.*

[7] Matthiessen, *op. cit.*, pp. 584-592, an excellent discussion of the issues.

tour ont influencé les imagistes, on a à peu près tout dit sur cette prétendue influence.[8]

Catel, on the other hand, relating the use of imagery in Whitman and Baudelaire, the father of Symbolism, described the American poet's originality as a link between realism and surrealism.[9] Evidently we have here to deal with conflicting opinions deriving from terminological difficulties. What seems probable is that, in the total picture, Whitman has been less followed as a model of poetic craftsmanship and more as an archsymbol of a perennial need to reconcile the American spiritual climate with its ever-changing historical and sociological conditions. It can hardly be a coincidence, for example, that in the three poems here considered there is but a single reference, and that by Crane, to Whitman as poet:

Our Meistersinger, thou set breath in steel . . .[10]

Matthiessen has emphasized this dichotomy in reference to the difference between Whitman's art and his message: "It is not surprising, however, that the poets who have profited from . . . [Hopkins' technical discoveries] most have used them to express attitudes far more akin to Whitman's . . . On the other hand, if we think of style rather than content, it is hard to say just whom Whitman has affected fruitfully."[11] This is in harmony with Allen's statement that, in Germany during the critical years from 1918 to 1922, "the American poet of Democracy seems to have been all things to all men."[12] Further light is thrown on the situation by Matthiessen's warning that "in his old age Whitman was anxious not to appear indebted to anyone."[13] A further example of such cross-lapping is Arno Holz' admiration of Whitman's ideas and rejection of his form.[14] The very possibility of a separation of content from form, a critical heresy these days, may perhaps suggest one cause of the present uneven estimates of Whitman's poetry; where such an issue arises, the poetry, or parts of it, are very likely not successful *qua* poetry. It will also explain why the style experts rarely[15] get beyond discoveries of parallelism, Biblical speech rhythms, end-stopped or run-on lines, and enumerative style to more important matters, and also why the content enthusiasts read out of the poetry only the mystical seer and message

[8] Catel, *Walt Whitman, la naissance du poète*, p. 442.
[9] Taupin, *op. cit.*, p. 115.
[10] Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
[11] Matthiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 592.
[12] Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 519.
[13] Matthiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 522.
[14] Amelia Von Ende, "Walt Whitman and Arno Holz," *Poet Lore*, XVI (1905), 61-65.
[15] A refreshing exception is Hermann Pongs' brief explication of "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking" as illustration of the author's category of "Beseelung als Erfühlung." *Das Bild in der Dichtung* (Marburg, 1927), I, 211 ff.

prophet. Thus two German poems on Whitman by Herbert Eulenberg and Johannes R. Becker reveal respectively such discrepancies of interpretation as the absolute acceptance of the cosmic reformer and the rejection of naive socialism for the purpose of Marxian warfare.[16]

In the three poems here considered the one common basis of agreement seems to be loosely defined pantheism identifying Whitman with the American background, its trees, rivers, plains, and people, as well as with certain historical phases. Benét, Lorca, and Crane (the latter with reservations to be discussed later) view Whitman not in the function of poet but of American high priest endowed with a therapy suitable to the ills of an age Whitman already divined on the horizon. Where they diverge is in the interpretation and use made in the quite different symbolic structures erected to embody this central dogma.

Benet's "Ode to Walt Whitman" presents the underlying idea concretely, almost literally. The prologue of Section I introduces Whitman at death's door in the winter of 1892. The main argument of Section II is cast in the form of dialogue, against the depression background of the 1930s, between the author and Whitman at the latter's graveside. Section III, one of the lyric interludes Benét did so well, recapitulates the mood, linking the longer narrative passages and invoking the spring arbutus, symbol of Whitman's perennial spring and rejoinder to the indictment ending Section II ("Was the blood spilled for nothing then?"). The lyric passage, furthermore, illustrates nicely Whitman's use of alternating recitative and aria, as in "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," while the flower itself suggests Whitman's preference for certain floral symbols. Section IV is a sprightly philippic against Whitman scholars of the Ph.D. variety:

> Though why did Mrs. Davis sue the estate
> and what did you mean when you said—and who cares?[17]

Such trivia are contrasted with the metaphorical richness of Whitman's meaning for posterity:

> You're still the giant lode we quarry
> for gold, fool's gold, and all the earthy metals,
> the matchless mine.
> Still the trail-breaker, still the rolling river.[18]

The ode concludes, as it began, with a figure merging Whitman into the dimensions and significance of America's mightiest river:

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[16] Herbert Eulenberg, *Schattenbilder und Lichtbilder* (Stuttgart, 1926), "Walt Whitman," pp. 214 ff.; Johannes R. Becker, *Das neue Gedicht, 1912-1918* (Leipzig, 1918), "Nachschrift für Bruder Whitman," pp. 135 ff.

[17] Benét, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

[18] *Ibid.*

> The broad flood, the eternal motion, the restless-hearted
> always, forever, Mississippi, the God![19]

The water symbol (river, sea, ocean) is, in fact, a device all three poets employ as a core of reference, a constantly recurring thread in the often diffuse themal development. Its tragic significance in Crane's case brings to mind the "lone patrol" near Paumanok, the "sea eyes and tidal, undenying, bright with myth" of *The Bridge*. Waldo Frank, stating that Crane uses the sea symbol "as a principle of unity and release from the contradictions of personal existence," establishes the thesis that the poet was dissatisfied with his symbol and succeeded in finding an integrating theme in *The Bridge* only to relapse into "the primal Mother-world whose symbol is the tropic sea."[20] I do not think it would be difficult to establish a similar mythopoeic curve in Whitman's poetry.

In Lorca's "Oda a Walt Whitman" the sea symbol is responsible for some of the poem's more striking passages. It not only sustains the underlying polemic,

> Pero ninguno se dormía,
> Ninguno quería ser el río,
> Ninguno amaba las hojas grandes,
> Ninguno la lengua azul de la playa,[21]

but provides also, with reversions to the symbolism of the Mass and the liturgy of the Church, the setting for such expressionistic images as the following:

> Por el East River y el Queensborough
> los muchachos luchaban con la industria
> y los judíos vendían al fauno del río
> la rosa de la circuncisión...[22]

In fact Lorca's poem, like Crane's, is mainly organized around a bridge symbol:

> Y el sol canta por los ombligos
> de los muchachos que juegan bajo los puentes...[23]

and again:

> y el cielo desembocaba por los tejados
> manadas de bisontes empujadas por el viento.[24]

More specifically Lorca's poem is a jeremiad against the vices a sensi-

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[19] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[20] Crane, *op. cit.*, p. xvii, *passim*.

[21] Lorca, *op. cit.*, p. 118. Other sea references are: "Soñabas ser un río y dormir como un río" (p. 120); "hombre solo en el mar, viejo hermoso Walt Whitman" (p. 120); "Tu buscabas un desnudo que fuera como un río" (p. 122).

[22] Lorca, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 122.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

tive foreign poet would be likely to confront in a city like New York during the depression era. Catholic Lorca regarded squalid sexual perversion in a limited corner of a single world city as a universal symbol of an entire civilization. Such disproportion between symbol and thing symbolized completely distorts the role played by Whitman in Lorca's poem. To set off the Good Gray Poet, the "virginal Apollo" with "beard full of butterflies," against New York pimps and perverts, the "maricas de las ciudades," is obviously to narrow Whitman interpretation by exaggerating one aspect of a complex personality. Lorca was of the opinion that New York was all of America, and critics have not been slow to point out the fact that he defends rather than interprets Whitman, regarding him as a symbol of America rather than understanding or responding to his song. Lorca is not so much interested in understanding as in identifying himself with Whitman, "obsessed," as Honig points out, "with the same sense of the body's purity."[25]

In the "Cape Hatteras" section of *The Bridge* Crane intended to invoke, according to Waldo Frank, "the geologic age that lifted the Appalachians above the waters."[26] The invocation is followed by a glorification of the birth of the airplane, the conflict between man and the new interstellar relations which seeks its solution in the attempted Bridge-Whitman synthesis:

> Our Meistersinger, thou set breath in steel:
> And it was thou, who on the boldest keel
> stood up and flung the span on even wing
> of that great Bridge, our myth, whereof I sing![27]

Both the "fragile arbutus" and the "butterflies in the beard" are overwhelmed in the stark cosmic symphony in which Crane sought to synthesize three levels of American experience: industrial, agrarian, and historical. In the Bridge context Whitman supplies the Panis Angelicus for a new, breath-taking Eucharist:

> But who has held the heights more sure than thou,
> O Walt!—Ascensions of thee hover in me now
> As thou at junctions elegiac, there of speed
> With vast eternity, dost wield the rebound seed![28]

Of this sowing, the "mashed and shapeless debris" of the crashed airplane is as integral a part as "something green, beyond all sesames of science." Lorca's melting-pot theme wins broader stature in Crane's "New integers of Roman, Viking, Celt."[29]

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[25] Edwin Honig, *García Lorca* (Norfolk, Conn., 1944), p. 90.
[26] Crane, *op. cit.*, p. xxv.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

The measure of Whitman as a theme in poetry depends, in the last analysis, on its integration in the structure and logic of the poem. Benét employs Whitman as a convenient mouthpiece, a sort of stage property, for his indictment of the present-day economic system, its materialism, corruption, and robotism. Statement or "message" dominates the imaginative construction.[30] Far from being transformed into "new integers of verse," Whitman remains the Camden patriarch intelligible only to whatever liberals survive today.

Lorca's elegiac lines throb with an almost feminine resentment of the modern rejection of man's innocent and traditionalized relation to nature. As Honig points out, he touches Whitman closely through a Catholicism that "is supremely a thing of the body, a touchstone for the mystic singing body."[31] This accent on the primitivistic, unfathomed instincts of man Lorca shares with poets like Rimbaud, Rilke, and D. H. Lawrence. On the other hand, in a more specific sense, Lorca's Whitman interpretation is at best the Whitman of certain *Calamus* poems or "the song of Sex and Amativeness" of *A Backward Glance* of 1888. There is more Lorca than Whitman in the poem's highly specialized imagery. Europeans seem to measure the uniqueness of the *avant-garde* poet in terms of personal martyrdom and social ostracization, understandable enough perhaps within the traditional literary perspective from Chatterton, Blake, and Hölderlin to Rimbaud and Verlaine. One might inquire, indeed, whether some of Lorca's more painful imagery (he is immensely fond, for instance, of the *aguja* or "needle" figure) is not ultimately derived from a deep-seated St. Sebastian complex:

> Anciano hermoso como la niebla,
> que gemías igual que un pájaro
> con el sexo atravesado por una aguja...[32]

If this view is correct, it brings Lorca ideologically into alignment with J. Middleton Murry's interpretation of D. H. Lawrence as "crucified into sex."[33] It is difficult to bring much of Lorca's imagery into line with any plausible Whitman relevance.

Whitman required the imaginative faculty in modern times "to give ultimate vivification to facts, to science and to common lives, endowing them with glows and glories and final illustriousness which belong to every real thing, and to real things only."[34] A few sentences further on

[30] F. O. Matthiessen, "Introduction to the Oxford Book of American Verse," *Poetry*, LXXVII (1950), pp. 36, refers to Benét's "Ode to Walt Whitman" as "sprawlingly diffuse."

[31] Honig, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

[32] Lorca, *op. cit.*, p. 120. See recurrence of the image also in "Norma y Paraíso de los Negros," p. 32, *passim*.

[33] J. Middleton Murry, *Son of Woman* (London, 1931), p. 278.

[34] Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Philadelphia, 1900), p. 548.

the Whitman of *A Backward Glance* cautiously retreats before such expansive doctrine, though as a young man thirty years previous he had given vent to a tumultuous enthusiasm that anticipated Crane's ecstasy with a curious note of foreboding: "The greatest poet does not only dazzle his rays over character and scenes and passions . . . he finally ascends and finishes all . . . he exhibits the pinnacles that no man may tell what they are for or what is beyond . . . he glows for a moment on the extremest verge."[35] And when he says that the bard "spans . . . from east to west and reflects what is between,"[36] we have Crane's bridge metaphors *in ovo*, "the span on every wing." (Whatever else the critics may think, they are unanimous that Crane made the major effort of our day to span the world of Whitman and our own.)

It will hardly be necessary to add to Allen Tate's brilliant analysis, in "Four American Poets" (*Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas*), of the merits and defects of Crane's major poem and of the reasons for the failure of the epic as a whole. *The Bridge* is, in fact, an unfinished product with many waste spaces and some almost commonplace prose. When Crane's usually intense sensation flags, the enumerative technique is reminiscent of Whitman at his worst or the theme is repeated in couplets:

> Seeing himself an atom in a shroud—
> Man hears himself an engine in a cloud.[37]

As for the arrangement of the "Cape Hatteras" section, it is important for Crane's purpose that the Whitman theme be introduced here, the turning point of the epos, at once a recapitulation and consolidation of the argument of the foregoing sections and a cosmic identification of Whitman with the "red, eternal flesh of Pocahontas," the American dream mother in Section II. Whitman theme and machine theme alternate as chorus and recitative, while the tension set up by the "star-glistered salver of infinity . . . sluiced by motion" is assuaged by the

> Recorders ages hence—ah syllables of faith!
> Walt, tell me Walt Whitman, if infinity
> be still the same as when you walked the beach
> near Paumanok—your lone patrol—and heard the wraith
> through surf, its bird note theme a long time falling . . .[38]

The "taut motors" and "beached heap of high bravery" yield to more reliable ascensions and spannings:

> The stars have grooved our eyes with old persuasions
> of love and hatred, birth—surcease of nations . . .

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[35] Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass and Selected Prose*, Modern Library ed. (New York, 1950), p. 448.
[36] *Ibid*, p. 443.
[37] Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

> But who has held the heights more sure than thou,
> O Walt![39]

The robust positiveness of theme outweighs Lorca's negative strictures about an America drowning in her own machines and grief.[40] And yet this apparent robustness was bought at the price of a pseudo version of American history and a structural incoherence, as Mr. Tate points out, particularly glaring in the "Cape Hatteras" section. Alluding to Crane's vagueness of purpose despite the apparently concrete character of the Brooklyn Bridge, Mr. Tate continues:

> The "Bridge" stands for no well-defined experience ... the single symbolic image, in which the whole poem centers, is at one moment the actual Brooklyn Bridge; at another it is any bridge or "connection"; at still another, it is a philosophical pun and becomes the base of a series of analogies ... In *Cape Hatteras*, the aeroplane and Walt Whitman are analogous "bridges" to some transcendental truth. Because the idea is variously metaphor, symbol and analogy, it tends to make the poem static ... The idea does not, in short, fill the poet's mind; it is the starting-point for a series of short flights, or inventions connected only in analogy—which explains the merely personal passages, which are obscure, and the lapses into sentimentality ... The idea is not objective and articulate in itself; it lags after the poet's vision; it appears and disappears; and in the intervals Crane improvises, often beautifully, as in the flight of the aeroplane, sometimes badly, as in the passage on Whitman in the same poem.[41]

This is brilliant criticism of *The Bridge* as a whole[42] and of the defective vision which Crane sought to articulate in his poem, but it hardly does full justice to Crane's treatment of the Whitman theme. It makes no allowance, for example, for the implications in the concluding verses that place Crane and Whitman in the mutual relationship of master and disciple as they set out hand in hand, "never to let go," towards a future whose blueprint the earlier lines of "Salut au Monde" had previously designed (the "sentimentality" charged to Crane is already in the model):

> O take my hand, Walt Whitman!
> Such gliding wonders! such sights and sounds!
> Such join'd unended links, each hook'd to the next!
> Each answering all,—each sharing the earth with all.[43]

Nor does Mr. Tate's commentary, excellent as it is on the negative side, take any account of such themal consistencies as the "saunterer on free ways still ahead" who continues to the end of the "Cape Hatteras" sec-

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[39] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

[40] Lorca, *op. cit.*, p. 126: "y América se anega de máquinas y llanto."

[41] Allen Tate, "Four American Poets," *Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas* (New York, 1936), pp. 31-32.

[42] See also Wm. Van O'Connor's interesting but unfavorable analysis of "Cape Hatteras" in *Sense and Sensibility in Modern Poetry* (Chicago, 1948), pp. 22 ff. note, for a complete listing of the Whitman poems mentioned or referred to in Crane's text.

[43] *Leaves of Grass* (Philadelphia, 1900), p. 139. Cf. Willard, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

tion "uncancelled his sure tread,"[44] or of the parallelism, attempted at least, between what a recent estimate has termed "man's relation to the infinite and his extending conquests of space" and Whitman's own "earlier struggle and his confident facing of the future and the unknown."[45]

However abortive *The Bridge* as a whole may be, both emotionally and structurally, we are only concerned here with Crane's use of the Whitman theme and its relative success as compared with the odes of Benét and Lorca. Against the complexities of what Gorham Munson called "the dimensional character of time" Crane was attempting the almost impossible: a synthesis through the agency of the Whitman theme of the dynamic verticalism of the Bridge myth (industrialism), the horizontal topographical link between the states (national unity with a somewhat regional flavor), and what Mr. Tate calls a vague pseudo history:

> . . . all that sum
> that then from Appomattox stretched to Somme.[46]

One is tempted to cite, with reservations, in Crane's defense his own lines on Whitman from the essay "Modern Poetry": "His faults as a technician and his clumsy and indiscriminate enthusiasm are somewhat beside the point. He, better than any other, was able to coordinate those forces in America which seem most untractable, fusing them into a universal vision which takes on additional significance as time goes on."[47]

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[44] Crane, *op. cit.*, pp. 33,39.
[45] Willard, *op. cit.*, p. 210.
[46] Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
[47] Crane, *op. cit.*, Appendix B, p. 179.

RUSSIAN POETS IN SEARCH OF A POETICS

VICTOR ERLICH

THE FIRST decade of this century was a turning point in the development of European critical thought. The problems of literary form, long neglected or relegated to the background, found themselves suddenly the center of the critic's attention. In Russia this recrudescence of interest in literary craft, especially in verse structure, was closely linked to the revival of poetry brought about by the rise of the Symbolist movement. It was from the leading representatives of this school that the study of poetic language received its most powerful stimulus.

The emergence of the Symbolist movement raised conspicuously the level of poetic craftsmanship in Russia. Verse writing, which had been overshadowed by prose fiction since the mid-nineteenth century, staged a triumphant comeback. The flat and anemic poetry of Nekrasov's followers gave way to Valeri Bryusov's Parnassian mastery of form, to the lush rhythms of Konstantin Balmont, and, above all, to the irresistible verbal magic of Aleksandr Blok. And in the wake of this poetic revival came a renascence of verse study, a concerted effort to attack the problems of poetic technique from the viewpoint of the Symbolist school.

This close interrelation between creative practice and literary theory was not in itself a novel phenomenon in the history of Russian letters. Since the eighteenth century every literary school had had its critical spokesmen who attempted to justify theoretically and to raise to the status of immutable laws the current exigencies of aesthetic sensibility. In the Symbolist era, however, this alliance of the artist and the theorist assumed the form of organic symbiosis. It was the poet rather than the professional literary scholar who now took the lead in exploring the secrets of the creative laboratory.

This practitioner's theorizing could not, to be sure, remain unaffected by contemporary developments in the field of academic philology. Andrei Bely, the most remarkable prose writer and influential literary theorist of the time, studied assiduously Potebnya's theory of poetic language.[1] Valeri Bryusov, an astute analyst of verse as well as its consummate master, discussed problems of prosody with Professor F. Korsh,

[1] Aleksandr Potebnya was an eminent nineteenth-century Russian philologist whose theory of language had a considerable impact upon the Symbolist aestheticians.

an eminent authority on comparative metrics, and was indebted to him for many methodological insights. Vyacheslav Ivanov and Innokenti Annensky, erudite poet-scholars, enamored of and thoroughly conversant with classical antiquity, derived some of their notions about the ancient world from the studies of the Polish-Russian scholar, Tadeusz Zielinsky, and of contemporary German Hellenists. And yet it is safe to say that the principal impetus behind the Symbolists' collective venture into verse study is to be sought in the artistic creed and, ultimately, in the underlying philosophical tenets of the movement they represented.

Russian Symbolism, in the words of one of its chief spokesmen, "could not be, and did not want to be, merely art."[2] It aspired to become an integrated world view, a philosophy, a metaphysics. While Verlaine, Laforgue, and Mallarmé were primarily concerned with evolving a new form of poetic expression, their Russian counterparts grappled with "ultimate" questions in a forthright attempt to find a way out of the *fin-de-siècle* spiritual impasse. The Symbolist movement was the swan song of that part of the Russian intelligentsia drawn from the gentry or upper middle class. It was the product of a culture which achieved a high degree of intellectual and aesthetic sophistication only to find itself faced with the prospect of inevitable extinction. As the historical cataclysm of revolution drew nearer, the world of the Symbolist poet began to crumble. The "ever-present sense of catastrophe"[3] pervading the verse of Aleksandr Blok, the greatest poet of the period, injected into the writings of this doomed generation a note of tragic urgency. The intensity of the creative endeavor and of speculative pursuits, instead of being paralyzed or inhibited by the impending disaster, was raised to an almost feverish pitch.

In the rarefied atmosphere of Vyacheslav Ivanov's famous "Tower," where, in the years 1905 to 1910, the literary and intellectual elite of Petersburg used to foregather every Wednesday evening, the conversation, combining French "esprit" and German "inwardness," probed with equal zest into Wilde and Nietzsche, into Eleusinian mysteries and neo-Kantian philosophy. Under the eye of a kindly though rather elusive host, bold and extravagant syntheses were attempted—efforts were made to wed Dionysus to Christ, to reconcile Solovyov's spiritualist philosophy and Rozanov's sexual mysticism.[4] In these unique gatherings there was some room, to be sure, for snobbish preciosity, for blasé aestheticism seeking new thrills in pseudomystical flirtations with the "Absolute." But it can hardly be doubted that the main participants in the Symbolist symposia brought to them a genuine, indeed a desperately

[2] Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Borozdy i mezhi* (Moscow, 1916), p. 137.
[3] Blok, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Leningrad, 1932-36), VII, 95.
[4] Bely, "Vospominaniya o Bloke," *Epopeya*, 1922, No. 1.

earnest, search for the meaning of life, for a satisfying set of values, however "private" or esoteric.

An important aspect of the *Weltanschauung* toward which Russian Symbolism was groping was its attitude toward language. The Symbolist's antipode and predecessor, the positivist, had been concerned almost exclusively with the informative or—to use the terms of Ogden and Richards—the referential function of language. During the period of "realism," the emphasis was always on the object, never on the word itself. The latter was seen merely as the medium of transmitting thought, a pointer, a pure denotation. The texture of the verbal sign seemed largely irrelevant. "Form" was regarded as a mere outward garb of the "content" or—in a work of imaginative literature—as a purely external embellishment with which one could dispense without any appreciable damage to communication.

Symbolist poetics made a deliberate effort to do away with the mechanistic dichotomy of form and content. "The present split," wrote Ivanov, "between the word's body-sound and the meaning, covered by the schematism of the rationalist thought, must be recognized, unmasked and rejected."[5] Ivanov's concept of organic unity of sound and meaning was inextricably bound up with an essentially esoteric notion of poetic creation. To the Symbolist theorist, poetry is a revelation of ultimate truth, a higher form of cognition, a "theurgy,"[6] capable of bridging the gap between empirical reality and the "Unknown." The poetic word is seen as a mystical Logos, reverberating with occult meanings. The metaphor, one of the poet's basic devices, is elevated from a mere figure of speech to a symbol, the function of which is to "express the parallelism of the phenomenal and the noumenal,"[7] to reveal the latent correspondences between the world of the senses, the "realia," and the superior or transcendental reality, the "realiora."[8] "The macrocosm," wrote Ivanov, "is reflected in each microcosm, in the same way in which the sun is reflected in each drop of rain."[9] And, as the sensitive reader strained beyond the "microcosm" of the poetic image toward its "deeper" meaning, the perception of the visible symbol ushered in the intuition of the invisible "substance."

But, if one may say that in Symbolist poetry the sign blends with the object, the reverse is equally true; the object is conceived as a mere sign,

[5] Ivanov, "O noveyshikh teoreticheskikh iskaniyakh v oblasti khudozhestvennogo slova," *Nauchnye Izvestiya*, II (1922), 16.

[6] "The Symbolist," wrote Blok in a revealing article, "is first and foremost a theurgist [*teurg*], that is, a possessor of occult knowledge." "O sovremennom polozhenii russkogo simvolizma," *Apollon*, 1910, No. 8, p. 22.

[7] Ivanov, *Borozdy i mezhi*, p. 134.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 212.

"nur ein Gleichnis" (Goethe). The word as we know it appears to the eye as a mysterious code to be deciphered. Nature itself is, to quote Baudelaire's famous sonnet, "Correspondances," a "forest of symbols," where each individual "tree" embodies an element of the higher reality. The unity of sign and object, postulated by Ivanov, is thus vindicated: "Form becomes content, content becomes form."[10]

In the light of this theory the relationship between the "signifier" and the "signified" was no longer arbitrary and conventional; it became intimate and organic. The word did not merely refer or point to a recognizable object, an identifiable thought-content. It suggested rather than designated, it evoked the otherwise inexpressible by uniquely apt combinations of sounds, by "verbal magic." Thus a direct correspondence was established between the texture of poetic language and its elusive referent. In order to decipher the latent message, it was necessary to pay close attention to the poet's "words, rhythms, images"[11]—to the metrical pattern, the euphonic devices, and the mechanism of the metaphor. In short, it became imperative to concentrate on the problems of poetic form.

Paradoxically enough, those very tenets of Symbolist metaphysics which stimulated interest in the problems of versification hindered at the same time the evolving of an adequate system of scientific poetics. The tendency to see in the poetic word primarily a hieroglyph, "an echo of other sounds,"[12] ran the danger of reducing aesthetics to the status of an *ancilla theologiae*. The insistence on the esoteric essence of poetic creation gave free rein to irrationalism and encouraged impressionistic poems about poems, the cognitive value of which was more than dubious. A typical example of such sterile impressionism is K. Balmont's essay, *Poeziya kak volshebstvo* (Poetry as Magic).[13] The characteristic assertion that "the word is a miracle, verse is magic,"[14] clearly precluded any attempt at scientific inquiry into poetic discourse. While Balmont's observations on the emotional expressiveness of individual speech sounds are at times not devoid of interest, they all too often degenerate into oracular incantations or questionable metaphors, such as "vowels are women, consonants are men."[15]

It was fortunate indeed for the theory of Russian verse that two chief representatives of Symbolist poetics—Andrei Bely and Valeri Bryusov—were not merely professional mystics, but remarkably conscious practitioners of the literary craft. Their intimate knowledge of and vivid interest in the problems of poetic technique tempered to a considerable

[10] *Ibid.*
[11] Valeri Bryusov, *Izbrannye Stikhotvoreniya* (Moscow, 1945), p. 218.
[12] Ivanov, *Borozdy i mezhi*, p. 153.
[13] Konstantin Balmont, *Poeziya kak volshebstvo* (Moscow, 1915).
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 99.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

extent their preoccupation with "theurgy." Moreover, a certain degree of intellectual discipline which both Bely and Bryusov managed to acquire during their student years prevented them from bogging down in the sterile impressionism of a Balmont.

Particularly significant was the contribution made by Andrei Bely. During the 1905-10 period, Bely stood in the foreground of the controversy raging around Symbolist aesthetics. Tirelessly and with an almost religious fervor, he restated the tenets of the Symbolist school time and again in fierce skirmishes with its opponents, as well as with various "dissident" factions within its ranks. In spite of Bely's familiarity with Western European epistemology and metaphysics, philosophy of art was not his forte. His long-winded explorations of the "meaning of art"[16] were made almost unreadable by a bizarre philosophical jargon. In effectiveness of presentation they were distinctly inferior to the essays of Ivanov, who somehow managed to preserve "Apollonian" clarity amidst his most "Dionysian" vagaries.

More original and rewarding were Bely's studies in versification. Taking his cue from the neo-Kantian theory of knowledge,[17] Bely sharply distinguished between metaphysical and scientific cognition. Aesthetics was placed in the latter category. Since, according to Bely, it concerned itself with forms and sensory material of art rather than with its "essence," it was, or rather was bound to become, an inductive, exact science. In an essay bearing the characteristic title, "Lyric Poetry as Experiment,"[18] Bely challenged the popular notion that a literary artist could dispense with systematic study of poetic technique. "While a composer," he complained, "who grapples with the theory of counterpoint is a common sight, a poet engrossed in the problems of style and metrics is looked upon here as a kind of monster."[19] Spurning this prejudice, Bely plunged into what he called "comparative morphology of rhythm,"[20] in an effort to discover the "empirical laws" of verse structure. The first result of this challenging attempt was a series of studies on the evolution of Russian iambic tetrameter from the classicist era up to the Symbolist period, published in Bely's celebrated book, *Symbolism* (1910).[21] These highly competent analyses of Russian lyric poetry were

[16] See the studies "Smysl iskusstva" and "Emblematika smysla" in *Simvolizm* (Moscow, 1910), pp. 49-143, 195-230.

[17] Neo-Kantian epistemology, particularly the philosophy of the so-called Freiburg school (Rickert, Windelband) had a strong impact on Bely.

[18] "Lirika kak eksperiment," *Simvolizm*, pp. 231-285.

[19] *Simvolizm*, p. 237.

[20] See the study "Sravnitelnaya morfologiya ritma russkikh lirikov v yambicheskom dimetre," *Simvolizm*, pp. 331-395.

[21] See "Opyt kharakteristiki russkogo chetyrekhstopnogo yamba," *Simvolizm*, pp. 286-330, and "Sravnitelnaya morfologiya ritma russkikh lirikov v yambicheskom dimetre."

undoubtedly a distinct advance over the obsolete procedures of school metrics.

It is true that the terminology of Bely's studies was not altogether free of the antiquated categories of Graeco-Roman prosody, which were scarcely applicable to Russian verse. But this preoccupation with concepts of traditional metrics did not prevent Bely from eschewing the mechanical, schoollike scanning of verse and introducing the fruitful distinction between meter and rhythm—the ideal prosodic scheme and the actual sound pattern of the poet's language.

Bely was the first among modern students of Russian verse to focus attention on the phenomenon of rhythmical variations. He understood full well that total conformity to the metrical norm or, to quote Lascelles Abercrombie,[22] "a perfectly regular succession of accents," is neither possible nor desirable in accentual verse. Bely demonstrated by means of painstaking rhythmic analysis that even a seemingly "regular" verse, such as Pushkin's four-foot iamb, cannot dispense with metrical interruptions—time and again one finds in Pushkin "half-stresses" where one is led to expect full metrical accents. These departures from the scheme, Bely insisted, are too frequent to be regarded as exceptions. They constitute too organic a part of the actual rhythmical flow of many poetic masterpieces to be dismissed as occasional, formal deficiencies. The evocative power of the poem is not impaired, indeed it is enhanced, by metrical irregularities which lend to the verse the quality of rhythmical suppleness and variety.

A close connection between these strictures and the creative practice of the Russian Symbolists is all too obvious. Even though the Russians never went so far as some of their French counterparts in advocating and cultivating "free verse," they loosened up considerably the "syllabo-accentual" canon established in the eighteenth century and perfected subsequently by Pushkin. Such masters of Russian Symbolism as Bryusov and, still more, Blok, introduced the purely accentual type of verse, the so-called *dolnik,* in which the number of syllables between stresses varied from one line to another.

Bely's obvious bias, and his tendency to regard the artistic methods of the Symbolist school as the only acceptable approach, lent an unduly dogmatic quality to his treatment of the meter-rhythm dichotomy. In the eyes of the fiery champion of the "new verse," transgression of the rule became the rule; violations of the canon were canonized. The "irregular" verse was hailed as intrinsically superior to the regular. Rhythm, defined in purely negative terms as "symmetry in deviations from me-

[22] Lascelles Abercrombie, *Poetry: Its Music and Meaning* (London, 1932), p. 21.

ter,"[23] was found to be "better" than meter. This insistence on the basic antinomy of meter and rhythm was even more pronounced in one of Bely's latest works, *Rhythm as Dialectics*.[24] In this erratic study, a unique attempt to combine Symbolist theory of poetry with Marxian dialectics, scientific definitions give way increasingly to emotionally overcharged value judgments. Meter is scornfully referred to as the "sclerosis of the tissue," while rhythm is described glowingly and vaguely as the "principle of metamorphosis and growth."[25]

Bely's normative interpretation of the basic prosodic concepts vitiated to a certain extent his concrete analyses of rhythm as well. In his study, "Attempt at a Description of the Russian Four-Feet Iamb," he tends to judge the rhythmic efficacy of a poem by the frequency and variety of deviations from the metrical scheme or, more exactly, by the wealth of so-called missing accents. Bryusov, who in general exhibited more caution and hard common sense in tackling specific problems of Russian verse writing, called attention to the inadequacy of this procedure. In his thoughtful review of Bely's *Symbolism*,[26] Bryusov correctly objected to appraising verse structure on the basis of an arbitrarily chosen component. Wealth of "half-stresses," he pointed out, is not necessarily an asset. Missing accents become a factor of rhythmic grace and ease "only if they occur in felicitous combinations with caesuras and with other elements of verse";[27] if this is not the case, they may, on the contrary, give the impression of clumsiness.

And yet, in spite of their deficiencies, Bely's studies in versification were an important milestone in the development of Russian scientific poetics. The effort to trace the evolution of a metrical pattern through a century of Russian poetry was a long step toward the concrete, historical study of Russian verse, and markedly influenced subsequent studies in the field. Instead of mechanically superimposing an abstract, a priori scheme upon a heterogeneous body of literature, Bely carefully distinguished between the actual realizations of a given metrical pattern in different periods of Russian verse writing. He painstakingly described the peculiar rhythmic tendencies exhibited by Russian iambic tetrameter in the late eighteenth century, the Pushkin era, and the second half of the nineteenth century. In his efforts to ascertain the unique rhythmic timbre of individual poets or of literary groupings, Bely came close to the historical relativism of later Formalist verse study. He seemed to be aware that each literary school had its own "poetics," that is, its own set of artistic devices. In rhythmic terms, this meant a peculiar

[23] *Simvolizm*, p. 397.
[24] Bely, *Ritm kak dialektika i "Medny vsadnik"* (Moscow, 1929).
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[26] Bryusov, "Ob odnom voprose ritma," *Apollon*, 1910, No. 11.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

way of modifying, or violating, if one will, the prevailing metrical canon.

The procedure of reconstructing the "poetics" of an individual master or of a literary school stood Bely in good stead in his few ventures into the study of artistic prose. His brilliant re-evaluation of Gogol found in the collection of essays, *Lug zelyony* (Green Meadow),[28] was followed more than twenty years later by a comprehensive and penetrating analysis of Gogol's literary craft.[29]

In his effort to confer on poetics the dignity of an exact science, Bely did not hesitate to apply statistical techniques to the study of Russian verse. He used this procedure for the first time in *Symbolism*.[30] The rhythmic peculiarities exhibited by the poets under discussion are illustrated by geometrical figures and graphic charts, showing the distribution of accents, the position of caesuras and of the so-called interverbal pauses in the lines. A technique of painstaking sound recording (*slukhovaya zapis'*), devised by Bely himself and perfected subsequently by the concerted effort of his disciples,[31] was a distinct improvement over the loose metaphors and glittering generalities about the "music of verse" which posed only too often as scientific descriptions of verse rhythm.

While the usefulness of graphic representation of various rhythms is not to be denied, Bely, with his characteristic bent for exaggeration, tended to overrate the importance of his "invention." As Zhirmunsky correctly observed in his review of Bely's *Rhythm as Dialectics*,[32] the Symbolist theorist seemed to forget that in the study of versification charts and figures are merely auxiliary devices, purely conventional ways of presenting one's findings. He seemed all too often to proceed on the assumption that there exist in poetry immanent laws of "mathematical dialectics." Algebraic symbols, Zhirmunsky declared, acquired in Bely's writings an autonomy of their own, as the critic embarked upon elaborate mathematical operations the results of which hardly warranted the effort they entailed.[33]

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[28] Bely, *Lug zelyony* (Moscow, 1910).

[29] Bely, *Masterstvo Gogolya* (Moscow, 1934).

[30] It would be inaccurate to regard Bely's charts and figures as completely new phenomena in the study of versification. Statistical techniques were used in the metrical analyses of ancient verse long before Bely wrote his *Symbolism*. His book, however, is apparently the first attempt to apply these methods to the study of Russian verse.

[31] I am referring here to the Kruzhok Ritmistov (Society for the Study of Rhythm), founded by Bely in 1910.

[32] Viktor Zhirmunsky, "Po povodu knigi *Ritm kak dialektika*," *Zvezda*, 1929, No. 8.

[33] Tomashevsky, likewise, cautioned against giving too much credence to statistical data. "A statistical operation," he insisted, "cannot yield any meaningful results unless it is preceded by a preliminary classification of the investigated phenomena." *O stikhe* (Leningrad, 1929), p. 76. Otherwise it is bound to remain a

This infatuation with scientific paraphernalia, which somehow coexisted in Bely with marked mystical leanings, found its most striking expression in his last pronouncement on problems of prosody. In this study he introduced and elaborated the notion of the "rhythmical curve" —presumably the most adequate graphic representation of the actual verse rhythm that he was yet able to devise. The curve in question was supposed to illustrate the frequency—within a given work of poetry—of the lines with identical rhythmic structure; structure was determined by such factors as the number of syllables, the distribution of accents and half-stresses, and the position of the caesura. This latest version of Bely's graphic method was scarcely an improvement over his first pioneering experiments. The choice of the curve's "determinant" was largely arbitrary. There was, in fact, no valid reason why the contrasts or the resemblances between the individual lines should be considered as *the* clue to the rhythmic pattern of the poem.

Bely's attempt to apply his newly devised technique to a rhythmic analysis of Pushkin's *Bronze Horseman*[34] did nothing to dispel doubts as to the methodological validity of the concept of the "rhythmical curve." Instead of vindicating the concept, it brought into sharp relief the dangers inherent in Bely's critical method, a peculiar combination of "intuition and analysis, discursive thinking and impressionism."[35] The mathematical formulae take on the aspect of a clue to an occult code, to a message skillfully hidden from the censor's eye and, perhaps, not clearly understood by the poet himself. Bely dogmatically postulated a correspondence between the "average level of the rhythmical curve" and the central idea of the poem. He then proceeded to decipher the central idea to "prove" by much dubious reasoning that the *Bronze Horseman* was nothing less than a prophetic anticipation of the Revolution of 1917. This is obviously Bely's mysticism of figures at its worst.

Valeri Bryusov managed, on the whole, to avoid the vagaries of his brilliant but erratic comrade-in-arms. More sober and level-headed than Bely, Bryusov was wary, in his own words, of "suspending makeshift bridges between versification and theosophy."[36] Deeply steeped as he was in Russian and Western European literary tradition, Bryusov was

"harmless though tiresome mathematical exercise." Not infrequently results arrived at after a painstaking count can be traced to purely statistical factors, such as the law of probability, and thus are irrelevant to the purpose of the investigation. Moreover—argued Tomashevsky—one must resist the temptation to regard the figure as a "grade." It is imperative to remember that the "coefficient" merely indicates the frequency of the phenomenon in question, but does not say anything about its intrinsic value.

[34] Bely, *Ritm kak dialektika*, pp. 145-232.

[35] Ivanov, "O noveishikh teoreticheskikh iskaniyakh v oblasti khudozhestvennogo slova," *Nauchnye izvestiya*, II (1922), 165.

[36] Bryusov, "Ob odnom voprose ritma," *Apollon*, 1910, No. 11, p. 58.

at the same time keenly aware of the new currents in poetry as well as in the study of verse. He shared Bely's belief that the practitioner of the literary craft could ill afford to neglect its theory. "Poetic technique," he insisted, "can and must be studied."[37] Like his teacher, F. Korsh, Bryusov eschewed the purely acoustic approach to verse and emphasized the close connection between the phonic, the semantic, and the grammatical aspects of poetic language. He was one of the first Russian students of verse to insist on the importance of "word limits" (*slovorazdely*) as a factor in verse rhythm.

In assessing concrete phenomena of Russian verse writing, Bryusov steered clear of the dogmatism which marred some of Bely's critical studies. Not unlike Bely, but more consistently, he appraised rhythmical devices within a proper historical context, that is, within the framework of the particular prosodic system. A good example of this wholesome historicism is provided by his provocative review of V. Zhirmunsky's study, *Rime, its History and Theory*.[38] Bryusov's discussion of the imperfect rimes of modern poets is particularly apposite. He objected to Zhirmunsky's definition of the imperfect rime as a product of "decanonization" of the classical rime. This purely negative description struck him as inadequate. Revolutions in literature, he insisted, have laws of their own. Thus, it would be more rewarding to speak of a new system of rimes, of the emergence of a new canon rather than of the disintegration of the old.

Less satisfying were Bryusov's ventures into general verse theory, *A Brief Course of Verse Study* (1919) and *The Foundations of Verse Study* (1924).[39] These erudite treatises are vitiated by terminological confusion and weighed down by obsolete concepts of ancient metrics, scarcely if at all applicable to Russian verse. As Roman Jakobson correctly pointed out,[40] Bryusov was unduly preoccupied with prosodic phenomena which are practically nonexistent in Russian verse, such as syncope, while paying surprisingly little attention to the crucial problems of the Russian accent.

Some of the studies cited above belong chronologically to the post-Symbolist era. Bely's *Rhythm as Dialectics* (1929) and *Gogol's Craftsmanship* (1932), as well as Bryusov's contributions to the theory of verse, were clearly the last echoes of a movement which had become history. It may be noted in this connection that most theoretical pronouncements of Russian Symbolism date from the second decade of the

[37] Bryusov, *Opyty*, quoted by Tomashevsky, *O stikhe*, p. 320.

[38] Bryusov, "O rime," *Pechat i revoluciya*, I (1924).

[39] Bryusov, *Kratki kurs nauki o stikhe* (Moscow, 1919); *Osnovy stikhovedeniya* (Moscow, 1924).

[40] Roman Jakobson, "Bryusovskaya stikhologiya i nauka o stikhe," *Nauchnye izvestiya*, II (1922).

century, that is, the period when the Symbolist tide was already receding. Bely's *Symbolism* was published in 1910, Ivanov's *Furrows and Hedges* in 1916. One is tempted to assume that these scholarly and eloquent apologies of Symbolism were prompted to a great extent by the desire to meet the challenge of new literary forces.

One of these trends was the so-called Acmeism. A group of young poets gathered about the literary magazine *Apollon,*[41] such as Nikolai Gumilyov, Anna Akhmatova, and Osip Mandelshtam, set out to chart a new course in Russian poetry. Their notion of poetic art was modelled on Gautier rather than on Verlaine or Mallarmé. The Acmeists dispensed with the mystical vagueness of Symbolism, with its vaunted "spirit of music." They strove for "Apollonian" clarity and for graphic sharpness of outline. The poets of *Apollon* were more interested in the sensory texture, the "formidable density"[42] of things, than in their inner soul or, to use Ivanov's terms again, in "realia" more than in "realiora."[43] And, as they sought to bring the poet's subject closer to earth, the Acmeists tended to reduce the gap between poetic idiom and cognitive speech. An attempt was made to restore to the poet's word unequivocal, precise meaning. The chastened verse of Gumilyov and Akhmatova went a long way toward discarding esoteric allusiveness and studied ambiguity, which were typical of Symbolist poetry. And yet, for all its vocal opposition to Symbolist aesthetics, Acmeism was essentially the outgrowth of Symbolism—a Symbolist heresy, as it were. Gumilyov may have pushed beyond Bryusov in many respects, but he remained within the limits of the same poetic tradition and the same social pattern.

A much more vehement and perhaps more momentous assault was launched on Symbolism by the rising Futurist movement. The watchword of the disgruntled artistic Bohemians who burst upon the Russian literary scene on the wave of the Futurist offensive was a complete break with the "stifling past." The Futurists declared war on all the idols of respectable society—on "common sense and good taste."[44] They repudiated in a sweeping gesture all authorities, all established standards—social, ethical, aesthetic. In the notorious manifesto bearing the characteristic title, "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste" (1912),[45] the signatories—D. Burlyuk, V. Khlebnikov, A. Kruchonykh, V. Mayakovsky—called defiantly for "throwing Pushkin, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy from the steamer of modern times,"[46] and proudly announced their "uncom-

[41] St. Petersburg, 1910-17.

[42] See Osip Mandelshtam, "Utro akmeizma," quoted from N. L. Brodsky and V. Lvov-Rogachevsky, *Literaturnye manifesty* (Moscow, 1929), p. 45.

[43] See above, p. 56.

[44] N. L. Brodsky and Lvov-Rogachevsky, *Literaturnye manifesty*, pp. 77-78.

[45] "Poshchochina obshchestvennomu vkusu," Moscow, Dec. 1912. See *Literaturnye manifesty*, pp. 77-78.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

promising hatred for the language used hitherto."[47] The subsequent Futurist declarations[48] insisted on the poet's right to revolutionize the vocabulary, the syntax, and the subject matter of verse, to do away with any and all literary conventions—from the worn-out "sentimental" themes of love and romance to the "obsolete" rules of grammar.

The Futurists made it amply clear that their sweeping indictment of the Russian literary heritage was meant to apply to the recent past as well. In fact, some of the most savage blasts of Futurist rhetoric were aimed at the Symbolist masters, whom they contemptuously referred to as genteel and degenerate epigoni.[49] Symbolism had been the poetry of apocalyptic forebodings, of anguished soul-searching, of tortured calm before the storm. Now, as the historic pandemonium half-hopefully, half-fearfully anticipated by Blok and Bely was about to break loose, the subdued quaver of the Verlaine-like "autumnal violin" was bound to be drowned out by the deafening drum beat of Vladimir Mayakovsky. It was the Futurist rebel—irreverent, boisterous, uninhibited—who was fit and eager to speak in and for the storm. Shunning prettiness and "harmony," he managed to recapture in his uncouth, staccato verse, freed from metrical fetters, the "polyphonic noise"[50] of the turbulent era. "We have invaded," boasted Mayakovsky, "the love whispers of the cozy porches by the thousand-foot step of the ages . . . These are our rhythms—the cacophony of wars and revolutions."[51]

This is not to say that the Futurist notion of poetry was in all respects at variance with Symbolist aesthetics. The champions of Russian Futurism shared their predecessors' distaste for realistic art and an abiding belief in the superior evocative power of the poetic word. While Bely opposed to the "dead emblems" of conceptual language "living" poetic images,[52] Velimir Khlebnikov likewise drew a sharp distinction between poetic and "practical" (*bytovoi*) discourse.[53] Moreover, the Futurist slogan of "shaking loose the syntax"[54] may be indirectly traced to Mallarmé's painstaking attempts to substitute the rules of poetic euphony for those of logic. But, if the Futurists were at one with the Symbolists in postulating an essential difference between poetic and prosaic language, they were far apart in their notions of the nature and function of poetic language.

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[47] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

[48] "Slovo kak takovoye," 1913, "Sadok sudei," 1914. *Literaturnye manifesty*, pp. 78-82.

[49] *Literaturnye manifesty*, pp. 77-82.

[50] Marinetti's expression.

[51] Mayakovsky, *Sobraniye sochinenii* (Moscow, 1928-33), XII, 18.

[52] "Magiya slov," *Simvolizm*, pp. 429-448.

[53] Khlebnikov, *Sobraniye proizvedenii* (Leningrad, 1933), V, 229.

[54] *Literaturnye manifesty*, p. 79.

The theorists of Russian Symbolism, as indicated above, valued the word not for its own sake but for what it suggested. In Symbolist poetics, to quote Mayakovsky's acute remark, "the accident of alliteration was presented as organic affinity, as indissoluble kinship."[55] The poetic Logos was seen as an esoteric allusion. The pattern of imagery, of rhythm, or of verbal orchestration was supposed to reveal the underlying pattern of the "higher" reality. Futurist poetics unequivocally discarded the Baudelairian theory of correspondences. It had as little use for mystical as for social "messages." To Kruchonykh or Khlebnikov the poetic word was neither a vehicle of rational thought nor a glimpse of the "other world." It was not, as Ivanov suggested in his essays quoted above, a reminiscence of mankind's mythical youth,[56] but on the contrary a "creator of myths";[57] it was a primary fact, a self-sufficient and self-valuable entity.[58] Poetic speech became an end in itself rather than a medium for conveying ideas and emotions. "We, the Futurist poets," declared the manifesto called *Word as Such*,[59] "thought more of the word than of the Psyche, mercilessly abused by our predecessors. Let us rather live by the word as such than by our own experiences." And David Burlyuk, one of the most belligerent spokesmen of early Russian Futurism, did not hesitate to denounce "all this talk about content and spirituality" as "the greatest crime against genuine art."[60]

This aggressive antipsychologism may strike one as inconsistent with the position taken by the recognized leader of Western European Futurism, F. T. Marinetti. In his famous *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature*, Marinetti insisted that the principal aim of the new poetry was to express modern sensibility in the language of the mechanical age. The notorious inclination for the "naked substantive" and the desire to eliminate "secondary" words, such as adjectives and abverbs, as well as punctuation, was justified in the manifesto by the need for lyricism, for free, untrammelled self-expression. The new poetic diction, freed from the delaying devices of conventional grammar, was to

[55] Mayakovsky, *Polnoe sobraniye sochinenii*, II (Moscow, 1936-37), 476.

[56] Ivanov, *Borozdy i mezhi*, pp. 130-132.

[57] *Literaturnye manifesty*, p. 79. One should add that the theory of the linguistic genesis of myths did not originate with Futurism. This hypothesis was advanced by a number of nineteenth-century anthropologists and linguists—see E. Cassirer, *Language and Myth* (New York and London, 1946); in Russia the problem of the relation between myth and language was tackled by the eminent linguist Aleksandr Potebnya, in his studies *Iz zapisok po teorii slovesnosti* and *O nekotorykh simvolakh v slavyanskoi narodoni poezii*.

[58] This is the rough equivalent of the almost untranslatable term "samovitoye slovo," coined by Khlebnikov and widely used in Futurist publications.

[59] *Literaturnye manifesty*, p. 82.

[60] David Burlyuk, *Galdyashchiye Benoit i novoye russkoye nacionalnoye iskusstvo* (St. Petersburg, 1913), pp. 12-13.

become, in Jakobson's apt expression, the "telegraphic language of the soul."[61]

It would be futile to deny the affinity between Marinetti's profession of faith and the theoretical pronouncements, as well as the creative practice, of Russian Futurism. The iconoclastic arrogance of the manifestoes, their strident call for a complete overhauling of Russian poetic language, the wealth of colloquialisms in the verse of Khlebnikov and Mayakovsky, and the latter's bent toward urban motifs—all this is strongly reminiscent of Marinetti's artistic credo.[62] And yet there is a significant difference of general emphasis between the aesthetics of the Italian Futurist and that of the Russian Futurists. Marinetti laid his principal stress on modern themes. Modern poetry, he maintained, must throb with the pulse of huge metropolitan centers. It will "sing great throngs, brought into motion by work, pleasure or revolt . . . greedy railroad stations, which swallow smoking snakes, factories hanging under the clouds on ropes of smoke."[63] It will glorify the advent of the new industrial age. For the spokesmen of prerevolutionary Russian Futurism, subject matter was a minor consideration. "Genuine novelty in literature," wrote Kruchonykh, "does not depend upon content . . . A new light thrown on the old world may produce a very interesting interplay."[64] What really matters is form: "If there is a new form, there must also exist a new content . . . It is form that determines content."[65] Primacy of form over content, this was the battle cry of early Russian Futurism. The verbal sign was conceived as "an independent entity organizing the material of feelings and thoughts"[66] rather than merely giving shape to them. "We decided," said one of the Futurist declarations, "to invest words with meanings, depending on their graphic and phonetic characteristics."[67] Attention was focused on the outward form or sensory texture of the linguistic symbol rather than on its communicative value, on the sign rather than on its object. Indeed, a deliberate attempt was made to loosen the bond between the two, to emancipate the word, as Kruchonykh put it, from its "traditional subservience to meaning."[68]

[61] The expression, "the telegraphic language of the soul," was actually coined by Peter Altenberg, an Austrian short-story writer; it was used with reference to Marinetti's style by Roman Jakobson in his study of Khlebnikov, *Noveishaya russkaya poeziya* (Prague, 1921), p. 9.

[62] The term "affinity" seems to be more appropriate here than "influence." While Mayakovsky's and Khlebnikov's flamboyant protestations of the purely indigenous nature of their poetry are not to be taken literally, the evidence of Marinetti's direct impact on Russian Futurism is very scanty.

[63] Quoted from Roman Jakobson, *Noveishaya russkaya poeziya*, p. 7.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] Mayakovsky, *Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii*, II, 476.

[67] *Literaturnye manifesty*, p. 79.

[68] A. Kruchonykh, "Novye puti slova," *Troye* (Moscow, 1914).

This revolt against meaning found its expression in the slogan of "trans-sense language" (*zaumny i yazyk*). The most extreme proponents of this notion were Kruchonykh and V. Kamensky. They tried to write verse composed solely of abritrary combinations of sounds, and they advertised their accomplishments as vastly superior in expressiveness and vigor to Pushkin's and Lermontov's feeble attempts.

If these rather crude experiments with nonsense syllables could be dismissed as an example of Bohemian extravagance, V. Khlebnikov's poetic discoveries attest to a much higher degree of artistic maturity and linguistic virtuosity. A "tireless pathfinder of language,"[69] Khlebnikov was too keenly aware of the organic relationship between sound and meaning to become the apostle of pure euphony. His verse, obscure and elliptic though it is, cannot, contrary to the widely held belief, be described as completely devoid of "sense." It is rather, to quote Jakobson's acute study of Khlebnikov,[70] poetry with a "toned-down" semantics. The basic unit of Khlebnikov's bizarre idiom is not the individual sound, nor the syllable, but the morpheme; the latter, be it a root or an affix, is bound to have a certain, at least a potential, meaning. Khlebnikov's avowed, though obviously unattainable, goal was to "find, without breaking out of the bewitched circle of the roots, the philosopher's stone of the mutual transformations of Slavic words, to fuse freely the Slavic words."[71] His favorite procedure was to break down the familiar words into their morphological components, which he then reshuffled at will and reintegrated into new verbal units, poetic neologisms. One of Khlebnikov's poems, "Incantation by Laughter,"[72] is based on an astoundingly ingenious play with formants; it consists almost entirely of newly coined derivatives from the root *smekh* (Russian for "laugh").

The use of poetic neologisms is typical of Khlebnikov's attitude toward language. The words he invented were always certain to carry a number of connotations, however vague and embryonic; but they did not have, as a rule, any denotative value. As products of the poet's linguistic fancy, they clearly did not correspond or refer to any identifiable aspect of objective reality. One is reminded, in dealing with his bold innovations, of the fruitful distinction made by Husserl between the "meaning" of the word and its "object."[73] Speaking in Husserlian

[69] Yu. Tynyanov, "O Khlebnikove," in Velimir Khlebnikov, *Poemy*, p. 26.

[70] Jakobson, *Noveishaya russkaya poeziya*, p. 66.

[71] Khlebnikov, *Sobraniye proizvedenii*, II, 9.

[72] "Zaklyatiye smekhom," *ibid.*, p. 35. An English translation of this poem is found in Kaun's *Soviet Poets and Poetry*, p. 24.

[73] In his *Logische Untersuchungen* (Halle, 1913), pp. 95 ff., E. Husserl distinguished between the "meaning" of the word (*Bedeutung*), i.e., the manner in which the thought content is presented, and the "object" (*Gegenstand*) to which the word refers. *Bedeutung* was construed here as a property, an integral part of the verbal sign, *Gegenstand* as an element of extralinguistic reality. One may add

terms, one could say that many of Khlebnikov's verbal formations have an approximate "meaning" but are apparently free from the "object." The semantic value of the newly coined word does not bear any direct relation to extralinguistic reality. It is contingent upon purely linguistic factors, notably the components or the inner structure of the sign and upon the general semantic aura provided by the context. The meaning of the poetic neologism is flexible, oscillating, dynamic. The slogan of the "self-sufficient word" thus became a reality. The customary relation between the linguistic symbol and the referent was reversed. In "practical" language the sign is obviously subordinated to the object to which it points. In Khlebnikov's "trans-sense" verse the object appears, if at all, as a faint echo of the sign; it is overshadowed by the whimsical interplay of the word's potential meanings.

What is true of the referents of individual words also may be applied to the "referent" of the whole work of poetry—the external world. Mayakovsky, in one of his articles, summed up the early Futurist notion of the relation between art and reality thus: "Art is not a copy of nature, but the determination to distort nature in accordance with its reflections in the individual consciousness."[74] This principle of creative distortion which Futurist poetry shares with the cognate trends in the visual arts, cubist and surrealist painting, operates not only on the verbal substratum of Futurist verse, but on the levels of imagery and plot as well. The tendency toward the "dynamic displacement of objects and their interpenetration"[75] makes itself felt in the grotesque hyperboles of the early Mayakovsky and in the "incoherent sequence of events," the "dreamlike logic"[76] of Khlebnikov's epic fragments.

The narrative poems of Khlebnikov and the early Mayakovsky often revolve around the motif of metamorphosis, of a fantastic transformation of things. In Khlebnikov's "Crane,"[77] the factory chimneys sud-

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that the Husserlian pair of concepts is somewhat reminiscent of the more common distinction between denotation and connotation, especially as interpreted by J. S. Mill. Cf. W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., "The Structure of the Concrete Universal in Literature," *Criticism*, ed. by Mark Shorer (New York, 1948), p. 393.

[74] Mayakovsky, *Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii*, I, 268.

[75] This is a quotation from an article by V. Khardzhyev, "Mayakovsky i zhivopis" which appeared in an anniversary publication, *Mayakovsky. Materialy i issledovaniya* (Moscow, 1940). Khardzhyev's study presents an impressive array of evidence as to the close affinity and cooperation between Futurist poetry and Cubist painting both in France and in Russia. This kinship was attested by the very name of that trend in Russian Futurism with which we are primarily concerned. The Moscow Futurists led by Burlyuk, Kruchonykh, Khlebnikov, and Mayakovsky called themselves "Cubo-Futurists," while the Petrograd faction, represented by Igor Severyanin and Vadim Shershenevich, adopted the name of "Ego-Futurism."

[76] N. Gumilyov, "Pisma o russkoi poezii," quoted in V. Khlebnikov, *Poemy*, p. 50.

[77] "Zhuravl," *ibid.*, pp. 76-83.

denly start flying like birds, while the real bird, the "hero" of the poem, takes on the dimensions of a mythical monster, cheerfully devouring innumerable human victims. In a more topical poem, "Ladomir," the capitals are made to "stand on their hind legs," the city "chews reins of iron."[78] Mayakovsky pushes poetic license to the limit in this wonderfully absurd hyperbole: "I ran like a curse. My second leg is next street, still trying to catch up with me."[79] As the Formalist critics were to point out,[80] in all these examples we have to do with a device of a "realized trope." A figure of speech was "extended in time," as it were, projected into narration. A poetic image became a poetic "event," an element of plot. Thus, for instance, in Khlebnikov's "Ladomir," a city which had been initially *likened* to a horse, acquired the properties of the latter and started *acting* accordingly. To revert again to Husserl's dichotomy, one may describe this technique by saying that the transfer of meaning implied by the trope resulted here in the actual transformation of the referent. The verbal device, taken literally, gave rise to a fantastic plot construction, as if vindicating the Futurist claim that the "word is a creator of myths."

The far-reaching poetic innovations of the Futurists, as well as their persistent attempts at theorizing, were bound to have noticeable repercussions on the theory of literature. This influence seems to have been at once beneficial and harmful. The Futurist's shrill insistence on the complete autonomy of the poetic word was a wholesome, if extravagant, reaction against the disregard of form, still apparent in the textbooks of literary history, as well as against the farfetched mystical interpretations of poetic imagery which had vitiated so much of Symbolist criticism. The theory of the "self-sufficient word" and its practical implementation highlighted the inadequacy of the purely thematic approach to verse. The activity of the Russian Futurists called attention to the inner dynamism of linguistic facts, since it demonstrated that the devices of poetic euphony, such as rime, alliteration, and assonance, can be employed for other than symbolic or sound-imitative purposes. In more general terms, it brought home the apparently forgotten truth that the degree of correspondence with "reality," be it the naturalist's world of senses or Ivanov's "realiora," is not the only valid criterion for evaluating works of poetry.

If the preoccupation with the "word as such" has encouraged the systematic study of poetic language, the glorification of literary change, of novelty, has tended to give prominence to the problems of historical po-

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

[79] Mayakovsky, *Sobranie sochinenii*, I, 109.

[80] See Jakobson, *Noveishaya russkaya poeziya*; Nikolai Stepanov, "Tvorchestvo Velimira Khlebnikova," in Velimir Khlebnikov, *Poemy*, pp. 33-64.

etics. The Symbolist theorist laid principal stress on the oneness of artistic creation. He was engaged in a quest for the "essence" of poetic art and was more likely than not to find this essence in the type of poetry which he and his contemporaries were writing. "All art," wrote Bely, "is symbolic: that of the present, of the past, and of the future."[81] The Futurist, as a matter of principle, would reject such a sweeping and dogmatic generalization. In fact, he could be accused of the opposite fallacy. Viewing literary history as a series of successive revolts against prevailing canons, he was apt to overemphasize the differences between various stages of literary evolution. Seeing the only legitimate touchstone in the degree of success with which a poet carries out the artistic program of his age, the Futurist spokesmen could not avoid the pitfalls of extreme critical relativism. Indeed, they went so far as to deny that poetry of a past age could be an object of aesthetic appreciation. The notorious call for "throwing Pushkin, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy from the steamer of modern times," obviously aimed at the hated "philistines," need not be taken too seriously. It is noteworthy, however, that long after the early Futurist brawls had become history, Mayakovsky could write: "Every worker and peasant will understand Pushkin exactly in the same way as we of the *Lef*[82] do: as the finest, the most splendid, the greatest representative of his age. And having understood him thus, they will stop reading him and hand him over to the literary historians."[83]

It is hardly necessary to point out that Mayakovsky's prophecy was given the lie by the ever-increasing interest the Russian "workers and peasants" have exhibited in Pushkin during the last two decades. This striking error of judgment proves conclusively, if such proof is needed, that Mayakovsky's methodological position could be easily reduced to absurdity. It should be admitted, however, in all fairness, that this ultra-historicist approach was, up to a certain point, a constructive factor. The Futurist's concern with the uniqueness of each literary school tended to bolster the tenet, which had been already championed by Bryusov and at times even by Bely, that the artistic efficacy of a literary phenomenon cannot be properly appraised without reference to the norms prevailing at the given period.

Another aspect of the Futurist credo which pointed in the direction of a scientific poetics was its belligerent, not to say crude, empiricism. The artistic Bohemians gathered under the Futurist banner had nothing but scorn and mockery for the Symbolist talk about inspiration, about "poetry as magic." Art was brought down to earth and rudely stripped

[81] Bely, *Simvolizm*, p. 143.

[82] An abbreviation of *Levy Front* (Left Front), the name of the Russian Neo-Futurist group founded in 1923.

[83] Mayakovsky, *Sobraniye sochinenii*, V, 254.

of its halo. It was allowed, in fact it was encouraged, to be alogical or transrational, but not necessarily irrational or transcendental. Futurism trampled upon the rules of cognitive language not for the sake of a "higher" cognition but in defense of the free, untrammelled verbal play which presumably could dispense with metaphysical sanctions. From a "guardian of mystery"[84] the poet became a craftsman. In his much-quoted article, "How to Make Verse," Mayakovsky wrote: "Poetry is a kind of production . . . a very difficult, very complicated one, to be sure, but still a production."[85] Obviously, there was no reason why the modes of literary production could not be described and accounted for in intelligible terms. Poetic creation became a matter of technology rather than of theology.

The Futurist movement has undoubtedly dramatized the need for an adequate system of scientific poetics. Indeed the movement was to become one of the main factors behind the emergence of so-called Russian Formalism, which attempted to evolve such a system. But, by the same token, Futurism may be held responsible for some of the blatant fallacies and shortcomings of the new school of criticism. Much of the methodological one-sidedness, philosophical immaturity, and psychological aridity of the early Formalist studies may be traced to the shrill exaggerations of the Futurist manifestoes and their single-minded concern with poetic technology. The slogan of the "self-sufficient word" ran the danger of methodological isolationism, divorcing poetry from life, denying the relevance of psychological and social considerations. Kruchonykh's assertion that "form determines content" implied the notion of a literary evolution as a self-propelled and self-contained process.

The impact of the Futurist movement on the new criticism of the Formalist movement made itself felt in the critic's manner as well as method. Close association with the Futurist Bohemia was to impart to the writings of its critical fellow travelers the rare and refreshing qualities of youthful vigor and gay exuberance. But what was gained in boldness and vitality was lost in restraint and in a sense of responsibility. The cocksure impudence of the Futurist manifestoes found a scholarly counterpart in the excesses of early Formalist publications which deliberately overstated their theses in order to shock academic pundits.

The direct contribution of Russian Futurism to the theory of literature was of less consequence than the broader methodological implications of this movement. The Futurist artistic credo never developed into a full-blown aesthetics. This was due both to the meagerness of theoretical output and to the lightweight quality of its bulk. Slogans shouted at the top of one's lungs could not serve as a substitute for a coherent sys-

[84] Bryusov, *Izbrannye stikhotvoreniya* (Moscow, 1943), p. 218.
[85] Mayakovsky, *Sobraniye sochinenii*, V, 426.

tem of intellectual concepts. Flamboyant declarations, often intended to baffle the audience rather than to clarify the issues at stake, were productive of more heat than light.

Some of the points made in the collective statements were subsequently elaborated in a more thoughtful vein in critical articles by Mayakovsky and Khlebnikov. Of Mayakovsky's theoretical contributions the most pertinent is probably the article, "How to Make Verse,"[86] which contains invaluable observations on the role of rhythm in the process of poetic creation. Khlebnikov's pronouncements on the nature of poetic language and on the tendencies of modern poetry[87] undoubtedly deserve more attention than they have thus far received. His unusually keen feeling for the Russian language, coupled with passionate interest in the problems of etymology and semantics, yielded a few insights of rare acuteness. Khlebnikov's philological intuition, however, could not quite compensate for his lack of systematic linguistic training. Some of his generalizations have a distinctly amateurish quality. Thus, in his otherwise perceptive article, "Our Foundations," Khlebnikov advanced the theory that words starting with the same consonant are necessarily semantically interrelated.[88]

The Futurist movement failed to produce poet-scholars of the stature of Ivanov or Bely. Coming as they did from the plebeian intelligentsia rather than from the leisure classes, the Khlebnikovs and Kruchonykhs had no opportunity to accumulate the literary and philosophical erudition which was such a strong asset of the Symbolist theorists. These buoyant outcasts of bourgeois society lacked both the intellectual equipment and the frame of mind necessary for rigorous scientific analysis. Having received their basic aesthetic training in the overheated atmosphere of Moscow literary cafés, amidst the deafening noise of burlesque literary battles, the Futurists were presently only too eager to attune their poetic instruments to the "cacophony" of the more formidable encounters of war and revolution. All they could do in the field of literary theory was to postulate emphatically a new poetics. To evolve a new poetics was quite another matter.

The Revolution of 1917 changed the tenor of Russian Futurist poetry. The notion of the "self-valuable word" was abandoned, the ideological content was no longer considered a "crime against genuine art," as Mayakovsky flamboyantly dedicated his "sonorous poetic power" to the "attacking class"—the Russian proletariat. And yet the Futurist's passionate interest in the problems of poetic language did not subside. Ma-

[86] *Ibid.*, pp. 381-428.

[87] See particularly "O sovremennoi poezii," "O stikhakh," "Nasha osnova," *Sobraniye proizvedenii*, V, 222-243.

[88] "Nasha osnova," *ibid.*, p. 236.

yakovsky's total commitment did not prevent him from insisting as late as 1923 on the need for a close analysis of the poem,[89] or from hailing rhythm as a primordial force in verse writing.[90] Apparently, in his new, revolutionary phase, the Russian Futurist remained true to the belief that "in the beginning was the Word."[91]

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[89] *Lef*, 1923, No. 1, p. 11.

[90] "Kak delat' stikhi," *Sobraniye sochinenii*, V, 381-428.

[91] For many ideas and formulations contained in this paper the author is indebted to Professor Roman Jakobson. Thanks are also due to Professor Ernest J. Simmons for valuable suggestions bearing chiefly on matters of style.

POPE AS A STUDENT OF HOMER

DOUGLAS M. KNIGHT

IN HIS Preface to the *Iliad* Pope remarks that "Homer is universally allow'd to have had the greatest Invention of any Writer whatever . . . Nor is it a Wonder if he has ever been acknowledg'd the greatest of Poets, who most excell'd in That which is the very Foundation of Poetry. It is the Invention that in different Degrees distinguishes all great Genius's: The utmost Stretch of human Study, Learning, and Industry, which masters every thing besides, can never attain to this. It furnishes Art with all her Materials, and without it Judgment itself can at best but *steal wisely* . . ."[1]

Something more than the reverence of a great poet for a greater one is implied in such a compliment. Homer has first of all a living immediacy for Pope; he does supremely well what Pope aspires to do. Pope's feeling for Homer as "the Father of Poetry" is explained here to mean, not that he is the dead begetter, but that he is the living patriarch.

Pope is completely aware, however, that though Homer exists as a living poet it would be a gross simplification to regard him as a contemporary. In his annotation he is constantly concerned with the "Antiquities" of Homer, the qualities in his way of viewing experience which are not Pope's own. As a result the many permanent aspects of Homer are interpreted by Pope within a context that concedes historical change. Homer is not made a sacrifice to history, but no more is he worshipped as a timeless god who needs no place in history.

This double awareness, of Homer's presence and of his pastness, manifests itself equally in Pope's regard for him as he expresses it in *An Essay on Criticism*:

> When first young Maro in his boundless Mind
> A Work t' outlast immortal Rome designed,
> Perhaps he seemed above the Critic's Law,
> And but from Nature's Fountains scorned to draw:
> But when t' examine every Part he came,
> Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.
>
> (Lines 130-135)

Homer is not identified with the basic powers of poetry because one makes an arbitrary standard of him, but because he compels the identi-

[1] *The Iliad of Homer, Translated by Mr. Pope* (London, 1715), Preface, Vol. I, B1 recto and verso in the quarto edition.

fication. To copy nature is to copy him, but only because he survives the vicissitudes of time to which all poetry is exposed. The order of the references in Pope's passage is most important; young Virgil, like himself, owes his primary allegiance to the art of poetry without reference to the history of poetry. But one cannot know what the art of poetry is unless one understands Homer, whom time has rather clarified than tarnished. If one is honest in asking himself what poetry should be at its best, then one must also admit that Homer can give a definitive answer; and one's sense of Homer's historical remoteness will be as important a support for this recognition as one's sense of his eminence in the continuing poetic art. It is Homer's very distance in time which permits the security with which one can make him a norm of nature. He has triumphed over history through his achievement within its limits.

If we grant so much to Homer, however, why could not there have been a more direct influence of such a norm on Pope's own time? The nature of heroic writing itself may help to explain the difficulty; for the heroic mode in poetry is made vulnerable by the very range of theme and poetic method which gives it strength. It deals with some of the most important of human concerns, and deals with them by including in the heroic genre the attributes of other genres. Thus when Pope remarks of the *Iliad*, "Everything in it has manners (as Aristotle expresses it) that is, everything is acted or spoken," he is pointing to a basically dramatic order in epic. Yet epic's dependence on formal simile creates an equally strong bond with descriptive poetry, while the descriptive and the dramatic are both brought finally to serve the ordering of the whole as a narrative. Heroic poetry, furthermore, is equally comprehensive in the cosmos it presents. Without the loss of narrative coherence it contemplates in passing the many-sidedness of human nature, the terror and beauty of the physical world, the overseeing wisdom of philosophy and theology. It bestows an order in variety on the world it builds around man as an implied suggestion of what the order within him should be. One might say that heroic is the extreme case of all good poetry; the most complex and profound of inward concerns are given outward coherence, are bodied forth by an equal variety and complexity of poetic means.

Precisely because heroic is as inclusive in its world as in its style, however, it is always open to the charge that what it says is irrelevant or untrue. If it becomes impossible, for instance, to maintain one's conviction that a coherent relation exists between men and the gods—as it exists in the theology of Homer or Milton—then the objective validity of heroic collapses even though one may continue to grant many aspects of its psychological validity. Or if it becomes impossible to maintain in language the mutual interpenetration of dramatic and descriptive modes, with the undifferentiated view of society which that mutual relation im-

plies, then the poetic texture of heroic fails even though one can perpetuate its formal rhetorical qualities.

Both these difficulties were fast developing in Pope's time, in part as the result of an even more basic confusion over the fit relation between literature and the society of readers and writers who maintain it. In Fielding's work, for instance, dramatic and descriptive writing are, except for purposes of burlesque, largely split off from narrative. For Thomson, on the other hand, the descriptive mode becomes the whole of poetry. Pope's allegiance to Homer and his equal allegiance to his own times make the fragmentation of literature and the confusion over its value his particular concern. In the face of both threats he accepts the task of maintaining a live relationship between his own poetry and that of Homer or Virgil. And he attempts, furthermore, to maintain that live relationship in such a way that he will be fully of his own time but not its pawn—in other words, so that he will be in a small way what he feels Homer to be, a poet who grows from a particular time and place, but also beyond them.

In accepting such a position for himself, Pope of course ran counter to the developing mistrust of poetry in his own time, a mistrust all the more destructive because it was only half-recognized. Hobbes and Descartes dismissed poetry to the periphery of experience, but the poets and the general public still by and large acted as though none of its old centrality had been questioned. "God said, let Newton be, and all was light." But all was not light for the poets, and it was the triumph of Newtonian physics which brought into focus much of the potential darkness in their position. Pope and his contemporaries justly valued the new ways of describing the physical universe which their time had found; but Pope the critic, like Pope the poet, was very much on the defensive about the continuing importance of poetry in human society. And in that defense Homer had a leading part to play.

Such was inevitably the case, because the heroic mode in its complexity is the first to be questioned by the skeptical. If poetry begins to be thought of as a concern of the senses and therefore as an adornment to life rather than an essential way of ordering it, the pretensions of heroic will inevitably seem out of place. As Pope was aware, the difficulty of maintaining a heroic poem had to a degree already been present for Milton, who solved it by choosing the one subject which would be protected from the criticism of his audience, and by developing that subject in a style which because of its intricacy could be used for no other subject without seeming ridiculous.

The very skill of Milton's stratagems for maintaining the heroic genre in English, then, made them questionable for Pope. Furthermore, if a Christian heroic subject still received a certain amount of formal accept-

ance, the more normal and "national" subjects for epic were not so fortunate. This was true because Milton had transcended them, but also because there was no longer available to the poet a way of regarding his country upon which priest, king, and philosopher could agree. Virgil and Dante had been able to transcend the national, and finally to make a symbolic structure from it, but only because they could assume that the idea of a real human community had already a significant meaning for their societies. They re-explored this significance, but they could not have concerned themselves so deeply with it if it had not already been an object of concern.

The nation in Virgil's or Dante's sense is opposed to the mere state; it is not primarily a political but an ethical and spiritual entity. The loss of such a view of the nation implies a weakening of the heroic subject, because with it goes one great guide to the definition of what is central in human experience. Pope must reckon with a view of the state which, like our own, has little room for the relation between individual and corpoate aspects of life; as a result many of the chief themes of heroic poetry are, like its complex poetic means, called into question. A poetry like Homer's can no longer stand in a direct relation with the contemporary scene, but only in an oblique one. Accepting, therefore, both the poetic standards set by Homer's achievement and the demands made upon him by his own society, Pope's career as critic and poet becomes very largely a task of mediation between the two.

This mediation has three important aspects for Pope. It permits him first of all a satiric use of the heroic. The double shock of *The Dunciad* or *The Rape of the Lock* results from the fact that our first reaction to both poems is amusement at the promposity of heroic pretenses. Our second and more enduring recognition is that the pomposity is a comment on ourselves, that when *we* pretend to grandeur we show how far we are from it. And from these two aspects of our attitude Pope shapes an even more decisive critique—that which recognizes and defines the limitations of a position like Belinda's, for instance, by revealing that in the eyes of her society her position is the "heroic" one. The conception of the meaning of a society has so altered that, where once its center was occupied by the hero and all that he stood for, now it is occupied by a pretty woman before a dressing table upon which stands the tribute of the corners of the earth. Similarly in *The Dunciad,* and of course far more unequivocally, Bentley and Blackmore are castigated not for what they have done so much as for the pretenses, by them and their society, about the value of what they have done in terms of significant poetry or scholarship. Mock-heroic, like other kinds of satiric writing, depends for its effect upon a tension between different standards, a tension which exists within the lives of its characters but of which they are unconscious, while

the reader, through the presence in the poem of the formal tradition, remains aware of the nature of the disparities.

The first great value of Homer and the heroic for Pope, then, lies in the establishment for his own poetry of an ironic relation among three attitudes: first, the heroic norms, second, those which his own society pretends to, and third, those which it actually lives by. Pope is also concerned, however, to establish nonironic relationships between his understanding of his own society and his equally clear recognition of the valid claims of a heroic attitude. As Pope sees it, the heroic concerns itself with man in society and with man in relation to the powers beyond society which he can imagine to a degree but which he can never pretend to control. The concept of human responsibility, and even more the view of man which justifies that concept, shifts in its passage from Homer to Virgil to Milton. But Milton's achievement does not outmode Homer, and Pope can note at the opening of his Poetical Index to the translation, as a point of continuing interest to him, "The great *Moral* of the Iliad, [is] that *Concord, among Governours, is the Preservation of States, and Discord the ruin of them*: pursued thro' the whole Fable."[2] Transfer such a statement to *Paradise Lost*, and it suggests fairly precisely the disaster which Adam and Eve create through their divisiveness. The heroic is concerned with rule, and it recognizes that self-rule and social are the same. It is equally concerned with the individual, society, and the gods, and makes its action from the possibilities of responsible and coherent relation between them.

If we think of the heroic in these terms, it is somewhat more understandable that Pope is willing to use so much of his best poetic talent in the translation of Homer. Homer is not only the epitome of precise, almost technical poetic achievement in Pope's eyes; he is also the first establisher of one great mode of interpreting the value of human experience. Such a view of Homer, furthermore, provides a proper context for our interpretation of Pope's translation. When he casts Homer into couplets, he is not so much implying that the couplets will do Homer good as that it will do English poetry good to acquire the benefit of Homer in so intimate a way. Perhaps our own concern with the historical distance between Homer and ourselves makes it difficult for us to recognize how consistently Pope embodies his critical interpretation of Homer in the translation. Homer is a living poet; the language for translating him must, therefore, be alive. He is a great poet; if one is at all successful with the translation, then something of that greatness will come to life in English. Pope is really satisfying a poetic duty in the translation; he is attempting to raise the standards of English poetry by incorporating Homer within it.

[2] *Pope's Iliad*, VI, 11 Hl recto.

The text and annotation of his translation are designed to support one another in achieving this end. Of the famous simile describing Hector's onslaught in Book XIII Pope remarks,

> This is one of the noblest Simile's in all *Homer*, and the most justly corresponding in its Circumstances to the thing described. The furious Descent of *Hector* from the Wall represented by a Stone that flies from the top of a Rock, the Hero push'd on by the superior Force of *Jupiter*, as the Stone driven by a Torrent, the Ruins of the Wall falling after him, all things yielding before him, the Clamour and Tumult around him, all imag'd in the violent bounding and leaping of the Stone, the crackling of the Woods, the Shock, the Noise, the Rapidity, the Irresistibility, and the Augmentation of Force in its Progress. All these Points of Likeness make up but the first Part of this admirable Simile. Then the sudden Stop of the Stone when it comes to the Plain, as of *Hector* at the Phalanx of the *Ajaces* (alluding also to the natural Situation of the Ground, *Hector* rushing down the Declivity of the Shore, and being stopp'd on the Level of the Sea.) And lastly the Immobility of both when so stopp'd, the Enemy being as unable to move him back, as he to get forward . . .[3]

The most striking thing about this comment is the detail with which it describes Homer's achievement. If Pope were annotating Homer's poem primarily so as to clear up confusions for the polite reader, he would not insist on such a careful scrutiny of the passage. Nor, I suspect, would he translate it as he actually does:

> As from some Mountain's craggy Forehead torn,
> A Rock's round Fragment flies, with Fury born,
> (Which from the stubborn Stone a Torrent rends)
> Precipitate the pond'rous Mass descends:
> From Steep to Steep the rolling Ruin bounds;
> At ev'ry Shock the crackling Wood resounds;
> Still gath'ring Force, it smoaks; and, urg'd amain,
> Whirls, leaps, and thunders down, impetuous to the Plain,
> There stops—So *Hector*: Their whole Force he prov'd,
> Resistless when he rag'd and when he stop'd, unmov'd.
>
> (XIII, 191-200)

If we have read and thought about the note, we recognize that the emphasis of the rhythmic structure, the alliterative order, the use of so many verbs at the ends of lines, are all directed toward what Pope as a critic maintains to be the qualities of Homer's passage. The result for his translation, where one finds such combined examples a hundred times over, is the Augustan poet's critical estimate of the poetic accomplishment of the *Iliad* fused with his rendering of it into English poetry. No translation can be more than a rendering; but we must give Pope the credit for having used more explicit care with Homer, more scholarly and critical care, if you will, than any other English translator.

The second great function with Homer serves for Pope, then, is the enrichment of English with a poem as immediate in its importance as *The Dunciad*, but important as no merely contemporary poem could be

[3] *Ibid.*, IV, 1025: Book XIII, note xviii.

in its revelation of the continuing value for poetry of the concerns and achievements which are central to the *Iliad*. This continuing value, furthermore, explains the third use of Homer by Pope. A corollary to Homer's significance for English poetry is his significance for English criticism. His work is a constant exemplum, and being so it enables one to judge other poetry more adequately.

Because of Homer's peculiar position as both a contemporary poet and a poet whose place extends beyond that of any given time, the judgments which he can help Pope to make are of a rather special sort. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have a whole scale of relevance to poetry in general, ranging from delight taken in them to reliance on their authority. Furthermore, the elements of the scale are mutually dependent; the authority could not exist without the delight. As a result, Homer helps Pope to hold opinions about poetry which are both immediate and absolute—opinions, that is to say, which center in the immediate and full nature of an individual poem, but which recognize equally the implications of general judgment about poetry clustered around the specific achievement of any given work. In our terms, Homer enables Pope to recognize that the two questions—"What precisely is this poem about?" and "Is this a good poem?"—are really aspects of a far more complex question, that of the immediate impact and the generalized significance which reside equally in a successful poem, and which therefore are of chief concern in the criticism of poetry.

This acceptance of the complexities of poetry gave Pope a firm position in dealing with certain implied threats to poetry in his own time. Both sides in the quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns, for instance, challenged the individual value of any given poem by their attempt to bring a dogmatic formula to bear on it. Madame Dacier argued for the automatic superiority of an ancient poem, Houdar de la Motte for the automatic superiority of a modern one. Both sides were fanatical in the support of theories which eliminate the problems of practice; and poetry itself was lost in the struggle. The recognition that practice and theory in poetry are inseparable, to which his study of Homer gives so much support, enabled Pope to use the poetry of the ancients as a critical guide without falsely simplifying the requirements for good poetry at any time.

This resistance to a false simplicity in critical thought enables Pope also to resist a false simplicity in the increasingly abstract philosophic thought of his time. He does not have to war with the effects of this abstractness as Wordsworth does, but his critical views are already set in clear opposition to them. It is no criticism of Wordsworth—though a clear measure of the difficulties within which he works—to point out that he is forced, in part by the pressure of mathematical philosophic thought,

to permit certain limitations to the field of operation which he assumes for poetry. Milton depends upon many kinds of awareness beyond the merely personal—the theology and drama of the Fall, the allusive power of eclectic simile, the poetic density of a Virgilian English—but Wordsworth depends upon an inward concept of poetry which centers it in the discovery of living relationships between a transforming mind and an external universe. His famous "spots of time" are the revelation of such points of discovery; but one may reject them, as one cannot reject *Paradise Lost,* merely by maintaining that they are purely phantasmal and subjective. Wordsworth is forced to assert that the events of primary importance in the world are those which, because of their subjectivity, it is most difficult to establish—either as real or as significant if real—and which in any case depend for their establishment on the cooperative experience of his audience.

Pope is in an uneasy balance between the position of Wordsworth and that of Milton. Through his acceptance of the heroic tradition, and through his glorification of it in the translation of Homer, he maintains an impersonally objective order for poetry and criticism. At the same time, like Wordsworth, he must defend and define the province of poetry as Shakespeare or Milton did not need to. Homer for Pope is a main buttress in this defense, and a chief instrument of this definition. As Pope sees him, Homer is not merely an author to be translated, or a model to be imitated, but a primary means of maintaining ordered values in poetry and criticism for a society constantly threatened with the loss of them. Pope could not write the great original poem which would have achieved these ends; but through Homer he was enabled to prolong, for his own day, poetry's precarious place at the center of men's deepest concerns.

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BOOK REVIEWS

RACINE ET LA GRÈCE. By R. C. Knight. Paris: Boivin, s.d. [1951?]. 467 p.

To what extent was Racine Greek? Opinions have been widely divided. Some have looked upon him as a seventeenth-century Euripides; others have declared—I heard one myself in an address offered to the Modern Language Association—that no French writer was less Greek than he. Mr. Knight undertook some years ago a thorough investigation of the problem, more thorough than any that preceded it, and he now reports his results in this large volume, packed with facts and conjectures, some discovered or first proposed by Mr. Knight, some the work of others.

He divides his investigations into three parts, first studying the general knowledge of Greece in seventeenth-century France, next Racine as a Greek scholar, and finally Racine as dramatist and poet. He finds that, in the seventeenth century, French classical scholars lacked the enthusiasm of their predecessors in the sixteenth; that, except for Du Cange, they added little to knowledge of Greek literature and civilization; and that the monarchial and ecclesiastical absolutism of Louis XIV's reign prevented their understanding the joy in intellectual liberty that had distinguished the Athens of Euripides and Plato. The language was taught superficially by the Jesuits. Rapin, La Bruyère, and Boileau probably knew little Greek. Racine himself, thanks to his excellent early training and to his own labors, was able to feel deeply certain aspects of Greek poetry, to understand Homer better even than Fénelon did, the Greek dramatists better than any of his rivals; but he never knew them as they can be known by scholars today. Moreover, it is doubtful whether, if he had understood them better, he would have acted very differently, for he was primarily influenced by the culture and the drama of his own country and of his own times.

Mr. Knight shows in detail how Racine's knowledge of the ancients developed. He points out (p. 227) the weakness of enthusiastic and ill-informed remarks by Maüriac and Jules Lemaitre. According to the former, Racine, when a boy at Port-Royal, "couvre ses livres de notes qui trahissent sa fièvre"; and Lemaitre thought that Racine, from the time that he was sixteen, was in a "disposition d'esprit" that would permit him eventually to write *Phèdre*. Mr. Knight, on the contrary, holds that the only Greek authors he knew well when he began to write plays were Heliodorus and Homer, and suggests that he may have been led to Euripides when he was composing the *Thébaïde* under the influence of Rotrou. He notes how much besides Euripides there is in *Andromaque* and finds that Racine drew near to the Greeks only in *Iphigénie, Phèdre, Esther,* and *Athalie*. In arriving at this opinion he examines Racine's remarks about the Greeks, his annotations of Greek works, the evidence supplied by his contemporaries, the sources of his plays, his classical reminiscences, and the findings of modern scholars. His general contention ought to carry conviction to all except those who cherish the legend that Racine himself helped to create, the legend that he was more Hellenic than French. Mr. Knight's book should be read by all students of Racine. I differ with him only in regard to certain details.

Page 31, "Labbe, qui inventa pour l'occasion, comme un reproche sanglant, le

terme d'helléniste"; his book was published in 1661, but the word had been used in 1659 by Lefebvre according to Knight himself, p. 35. Page 76, "Eschyle est rejeté"; but I have suggested (*History*, IV, 157) that he may have been imitated in Boyer's *Agamemnon*, and Knight seems on p. 126 to agree. Page 99, tragi-comedy "ne disparut définitivement qu'en 1672"; one is found as late as 1687. Page 108, Voltaire's *Sémiramis* is by no means "sans amour." Page 117, as K. asks "par quel intermédiaire" a remark of the scholiast on *Hecuba* may have reached Gombauld, I call his attention to the fact that an edition of *Hecuba* with scholias was published at Paris in 1545. Page 124, La Pinelière "suit exclusivement Sénèque"; no, his prologue was influenced by Euripides. Page 127, Brie's *Héraclides* is not a lost play; I classified it as one in 1940 (*History*, IV, 401), but I subsequently found that the MS is in the Bibliothèque Nationale and discussed the tragedy, which is derived from Euripides, in *French Tragedy in the Time of Louis XV and Voltaire*, I, 96-97. Page 132, the *Médée* of Longepierre was by no means, as K. implies, a failure. Page 244, there is no proof that Racine was displeased with Molière's production of his *Alexandre*; his giving the play to the Hôtel de Bourgogne may have been due merely to his desire to have it acted by a more celebrated troupe. Pp. 245-246, "deux pièces perdues de Gabriel Gilbert"; one of them, *Les Amours d'Ovide*, is certainly not lost, for I own a copy of it myself; except that Ovid had a role in this play and in one projected by Racine, there is no necessary resemblance between the two plays; moreover, we do not know that Gilbert's lost *Théagène* was certainly derived from Heliodorus; consequently I consider our information too uncertain to support K.'s theory that the lost play Racine is supposed to have based on Heliodorus was, if it ever existed, written as a reply to Gilbert's. Page 249, Mesnard believed that, when Racine wrote "On promet hier la *Thébaïde* à l'Hôtel," he was referring to his own play; K. objects on the ground that Racine had previously referred to his tragedy as the *Frères* and supposes that he was referring to a *Thébaïde* by another author; as Racine subsequently employed both names, and as his tragedy is called the *Thébaïde* when first mentioned in La Grange's *Registre*, I consider the preponderance of evidence in favor of Mesnard's interpretation. Page 291, if one admits that *Floridon* was a source of *Bajazet*, there is no need to mention Heliodorus in this connection. Page 326, Corneille's "retraite" was in 1674, not in 1672. Page 329, K. prefers to follow Brunetière and Gros in thinking that Racine was moved by Quinault's operas to write *Iphigénie* rather than, as I have suggested, by his tragedy, *Bellérophon*, and by Thomas Corneille's *Ariane*; but there is no necessary conflict between the two hypotheses, for Racine may have been influenced both by tragedies and by operas derived from ancient legend. Pp. 368, 373. K. rejects the evidence of a note on the MS of *Iphigénie* that Mesnard at first attributed to J.-B. Racine; if he had examined Mesnard's second edition, he would have seen that Mesnard rejected it himself; there remains, however, Louis Racine's statement that *Phèdre* had been acted when his father started to work on *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and K. seems to admit on p. 149 that the only surviving sketch of the play was made in 1676-78; nevertheless, he prefers to hold that the most probable date for the composition of the sketch is 1673.[1]

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[1] Among misprints noted, the reader should correct these: p. 100, line 21, and index, *read* Rayssiguier; p. 106, note 2, *for* 1624 *read* 1623; p. 128, line 22, *for* 1679 *read* 1697; p. 245, note 6, *for* II *read* III; p. 289, line 17, *for* mieux *read* vieux; p. 329, line 17, *for* 1763 *read* 1673.

A CYCLE OF CATHAY. THE CHINESE VOGUE IN ENGLAND DURING THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES. By William W. Appleton. New York: Columbia University Press, 1951. vii, 182 p.

Professor Appleton's book comes as a welcome addition to a field already explored by Reichwein, Ch'en Shou-yi, Earl Pritchard, and others. It sums up in a terse and interesting manner the main facts and phenomena of Anglo-Chinese cultural relations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The writer's task was more difficult than that of one who undertakes to examine the same field in France. In general the Chinese vogue was the same in both countries, but in details there are important differences. These arise from fundamental differences in the religious and political atmosphere in which the cult developed. In England, particularly in the eighteenth century, the seeds of Sinophilism fell upon a ground which, although rich in intellectual possibilities, suffered largely from widespread conservatism in religious and political matters. The Deist movement, for example, (which might have—and in fact did—draw some inspiration from Chinese thought) never went much further than speculation in theology, in spite of the radicalism of certain writers such as Tindal. Deism was ultimately smothered by clerical conformity and philosophical indifference. But the same movement, crossing the Channel, became immediately a part of that anticlerical and anti-Christian campaign which was one of the most significant aspects of the age of the *philosophes*.

However, in the most important part of the English Deist movement—the development of Biblical exegesis—the name of China frequently intrudes itself. Professor Appleton has shown how, in the matter of the "original" language theory, the Far Eastern culture was cited to prove the existence of a universal tongue. Such men as John Webb, who found in the Chinese characters the original pre-Babel language, show to what extent the panegyrics of the Jesuits influenced some of the English scholars of the time. The Noahchide theory, with its various ramifications, was used to support ideas concerning the source of all religions as startling as those held by the Jesuit group called the Figurists.

The similarity of the Confucian Doctrine of the Mean with the European conception of the *honnête homme*, the Chesterfieldian gentleman, might suggest itself as one of the most fruitful sources of Sinophilism. The author has explored this possibility and his results are strikingly meager. One is led to the conclusion that it was the influence of Horace and other classical writers, and not that of the Chinese canon, which was significant.

Chapter III, "Confucius, the Good Governor," discusses the role of the Chinese sage in the development of English thought of the period. Here again the author has been able to find little that is vital. Late in the seventeenth century Sir William Temple expressed a warm admiration for Confucius but his enthusiasm was not widely shared. The philosopher's name was frequently used to reinforce the doctrines of political idealism, but on the whole the British public was politically self-satisfied and not inclined to reach to the other end of the world for precepts of perfection in government.

The difference in the effect of the new knowledge of China on the two countries, France and England, was due to several factors. For one thing England did not have an outstanding Sinophile of the caliber of Voltaire or Leibnitz. Samuel Johnson, the only man of the same degree of pre-eminence, was at first only mildly eulogistic of Chinese culture and later definitely antagonistic. A still more important cause of difference derives from the chief source of the China panegyric, the Jesuit order. The period of the China cult coincides with the

great Jansenist-Jesuit controversy. This quarrel exerted a powerful influence on the philosophical and religious currents of the time in France; and, since the Society of Jesus had officially "adopted" China, it was inevitable that their Sinophilism would become involved in the larger struggle between conservatism and liberalism in theology. The quarrel over Father Lecomte's *Memoirs* at the turn of the century is a striking example. The efforts to have the book condemned as heretical resulted—if we are to believe the testimony of the time—in the wide dissemination of the facts concerning China.

In England there was little opportunity to make vital contacts as did Leibnitz, Montesquieu, and others, with the Jesuit missionaries who had returned to Europe. China was known chiefly through the Jesuit authors—Trigault, Duhalde, Lecomte, etc.—read either in the original or in translation. An equally important source for the Englishman of the eighteenth century, however, was the testimony of the trader. The sea captains and political emissaries who returned to England with vivid stories of the corruption of Chinese officials and of the tortuosities of Chinese diplomacy had obtained a knowledge of the empire more local, perhaps, than national—certainly more realistic than idealistic—but it was a point of view more likely to appeal to the insular Britisher than the spirit of idealistic cosmopolitanism at the heart of the Jesuit Sinomania. At any rate this point of view served to counterbalance the utopian ideas adopted by Voltaire and others. It is, therefore, quite fitting that Professor Appleton should end his book with a chapter on the Macartney embassy, an event which, in a sense, rings down the curtain on this period of Occidental-Oriental rapprochement.

One must not entirely discount the possibility of Chinese influence on English thought, though the evidence may be hard to obtain. The recently published letters of Du Bos to John Locke show how eagerly English scholars strove to keep in touch with all the material published on the continent concerning the peoples of the Far East and their institutions. This information was discussed in the coffeehouses and teashops. How much more accurate knowledge of the thinking of the time we would possess if only we could have a record of these conversations, if only we possessed a sort of James Boswell of the Coffeehouse!

If the influence of China on English thought is obscure, the influence of the Far Eastern empire in aesthetic matters is much more clear. A few men like Sir William Chambers and Chippendale built a definite cultural bridge between East and West, even if that bridge turned out to be a comparatively temporary structure.

The influence of Chinese ideas on European gardening has been discussed by Professor Lovejoy and, in a more extended form, by Osvald Siren in his recent work, *China and Gardens of Europe of the XVIIIth Century*. Professor Appleton has pointed out that English gardeners "enthusiastically imitated the picturesque Oriental landscapes, unaware of their symbolic design"; Sir William Chambers himself was keenly alive to the fact that the form had been imitated at the expense of the spirit. The movement was one manifestation of the attempt to get away from the cold rectitude of classicism to something more vital, more intimate, something which would appeal to the feelings. It was inevitable, therefore, that the Anglo-Chinese garden should itself give way to the hypersentimental landscape of the Romantic Age. In the introduction of the idea of *beau désordre*, however, the Sinophile movement made a real contribution to garden architecture and topography.

In furniture and architecture also, the same movement away from geometrical lines felt the imprint of Chinese aesthetics. In furniture design such men as Chippendale were able to make a real contribution by adapting the Oriental art motifs. In architecture the "Chinese" was often associated with the "Gothic" (the illus-

tration facing p. 101 is an excellent example), and the extravagances of the one led to the condemnation of the extravagances of the other.

While the pagodas, *t'ingtze*, and crooked bridges of the Anglo-Chinese garden have nearly all disappeared (Chambers' pagoda at Kew Gardens is one of the few remaining examples), modern European furniture has never quite lost the touch of the Orient introduced at this time.

The cult of *chinoiserie* in England, which the author describes in Chapter VI, followed the same lines as the movement in France. Here again it was inspired by the desire for lightness, delicacy, and fantasy in decoration. Having its origins in the mass of Chinese *objets d'art* which flooded Europe from the end of the sixteenth century on, it was from the beginning an imitation of an imitation of reality, but this imitation was so widespread that, before the period ended, we find merchants on both sides of the Channel clamoring for government protection against the importation of those very originals which they were so profitably imitating.

In the field of belles-lettres the influence of China was slow in coming. Professor Appleton summarizes the appearance of the Chinese motif on the English stage. It is interesting to note that the most vital point of contact with the Chinese drama, in France and England, came from the same source—Prémare's translation of the *Orphan of the House of Chao* (published in Duhalde), which furnished inspiration to Voltaire for his *Orphelin de la Chine* and to Murphy for his *Chinese Orphan*. For the rest, the impact of the new knowledge of China on the English stage was chiefly limited to the creation of a "type" as exotically false as the figures on an imitation porcelain vase. In other aspects of belles-lettres, it remained for the nineteenth century to discover the beauties of Chinese poetry and the social values in the Chinese novel.

In his chapter, "The Tide Recedes," Professor Appleton shows how the movement declined after 1750 so that, by the end of the century, Sinophilism in England was becoming nothing more than an interesting chapter in the history of exoticism. It was not until the nineteenth century that the development of Sinology as a scientific subject produced a more profound and better balanced conception of the art and thought of the great Oriental empire.

A Cycle of Cathay is by no means a definitive work on the subject; but, as a point of departure for more detailed researches, it is well worth studying. The addition of a bibliographical list of the works mentioned in the footnotes might have added to the usefulness of the volume.

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POESÍA ESPAÑOLA. ENSAYO DE MÉTODOS Y LÍMITES ESTILÍSTICOS. By Dámaso Alsonso. Madrid: Biblioteca Románica Hispánica, 1950. 677 p.

This book is an ideal combination of stylistic theory, interpretation of texts, "literary science," and artistically informed literary history.

As a theoretician of style Dámaso Alonso starts from the positions of Saussure and Bally. He denies, however, that language in practice can ever be separated from speech, or that the affective element alone can be a criterion for establishing the domain of style versus the domain of grammar. The only worthy object of stylistic study is the language of the literary artist. Any speaker, i.e., original speaker, may be included in the category of artists. But Alonso denies categorically the thesis that the nonartist is of any interest for style studies. We agree with him on this point as well as in the claim that writing for "beauty's sake," and similar inept formulas, must be rejected; for it can be demon-

strated that even the average speaker is at least as conscious of the effects of his speech on the hearer as is the artist. But no one would say that any speaker speaks for "beauty's sake." Artist and speaker express themselves. In this expression the unconscious elements are the stronger. In each "speech," poetic or not, artistic or not, there is likewise an inseparable unit of concept, affect, and imagination. Consequently the object of stylistics is to work out in each individual case the unicity of this compound against a common, linguistic background. In Dámaso Alonso's sound theory, supported by practical examples, one may distinguish acceptance and rejection of other theories. He shares, by coincidence, the ideas of Iorgu Iordan and Joseph Nadler, neither of whom he seems to know, however. Benedetto Croce, as well as Prince Trubetzkoy and the whole structural school, he opposes with sound arguments.

As an interpreter of texts, Dámaso Alonso represents the most objective imaginable type of scholarly scrutiny and pedagogical ability. He moves easily from strophic structure, metrics, accents, caesura, smooth or rough enjambement to word order, moderate and exaggerated hyperbaton, aristocratic or popular selection of vocabulary, particular figures of style and, last but not least, imagery. He is more concerned with exact description than with explanation at all costs. But the explanations given are always convincing.

From Dámaso Alonso, who is himself a reader of taste, a poet, a critic, a man who believes in intuition and inspiration, and not merely in the "making" of an artifact, we willingly accept a consciously limited "science of style," necessarily coinciding with "science of literature," *"Literaturwissenschaft,"* "literary scholarship." This "science," admittedly only a sector of approach to the mystery of poetry, works to a certain extent with algebraic formulas to underscore undeniable principles. Thus something universal is grasped as underlying the stylistic findings, which are not haphazard concrete traits, found in single authors. This quasi-abstract universal, versus the individual and psychological elements in style, guarantees the possibility of a "history" of style.

History of style seems paramount to Dámaso Alonso. He therefore tries to find a workable delimitation of his study. Since there is a difference between a poet and a prose writer, between a Spanish poet and an English poet, between a poet of the Golden Age and a poet of the nineteenth century, a "popular" and a "learned" poet, and since there is no "individual" poet severed from his nation and from his epoch, and no poet without external "influences" of some kind, Alonso restricts his investigations to the *siglo de oro* poets who "imitate" the Italians, preferably in Bernardo Tasso's and Garcilaso's *lira* strophe, and who experiment, like the "imitated" Italians themselves, with metrical variations analogous to the Latin variations of the Horatian odes. His "qualitative" choice fell on Garcilaso, Fray Luis de León, San Juan de la Cruz, Góngora, Lope de Vega, and Quevedo, and the *vinculación* between the signifying and the signified in these poets.

The Latin clarity of Dámaso Alonso in disentangling such a rich compound of elements puts him in a position comparable to Auerbach's in his *Mimesis;* he proceeds to study style from one specific though broad approach. He writes the history of love expressed *al itálico modo*, but also with reminiscences of the Spanish popular tradition, in sonnets and *liras*. He finds this topic stylized *a la española, a lo divino, a lo barroco*. This baroque mode again is either classicistic-manneristic, or realistic, or realistic-manneristic. Thus in Alonso's stylistic-literary history of the Italianizing lyric in the Golden Age, the three generations are easily distinguishable.

The results are neat, clear, convincing, sometimes overwhelming in the exact-

ness of details. An example is the unequivocal result of an exact identification of the epithetless, nominal style of San Juan de la Cruz when he describes the dryness of his nights, and the jubilant asyndeton, halted, however, by the quiet of polysyllabic adjectives or verb groups, as soon as the illuminative and unitive stages are rendered. These new findings were not even suspected in Alonso's older work on *La poesía de San Juan de la Cruz* (1942), but now they prove to be prevalent not only in one but in several poems of the saint. His individual stylistic behavior does not, however, change the fundamental character of this mystic as an Italianizing poet in the tradition *a lo divino* of Spain.

With Alonso's book in hand, we are safe in saying that a science of stylistics exists, not a science for determining "affective speech," but rather of the artistic grasp on poetry; not of subjective intuition, but of objective proof; not of personal lucubrations but of communicable and teachable procedure. The limitations of this new science in the making must be compensated, Dámaso Alonso thinks, with Spitzer, by a constant shifting of method, dealing individually with individual authors. Alonso is, as far as method is concerned, even ready to leave the *ergon* in order to reconstruct the poet's probable *energeia* in creating it. Thus, apparently falling back to the fallacy of Audiat, he actually attains at least what Croce and Spitzer meant by the poetical (rather than the historical) personality of the poet. He sees four Lopes at different epochs instead of one. We may not approve of these various *rodeos* from work to creative action and back to the work again, if the circle around the finished artifact becomes too wide. And yet, if this way leads to good results, why block it by an ergocentric theory?

We remain grateful to Dámaso Alonso for the broadness of his views and the exactness of his varied methods. He would be the first to recognize that his approach, too, is a tentative one, not a customary pattern. But it is a good approach, and a truly promising one. His idea of "science of literature" is more restrained but much sharper than the previous attempts of Dragomirescu, Ermatinger, Petersen, Kayser, Warren-Wellek, and Michaud. One is particularly impressed by the imitability of the method (the great desideratum painfully lacking in the demonstrative individualism of Vossler, Spitzer, Spoerri, and Curtius, despite their great merits). One of Alonso's pupils, Carlos Bousoño, has already applied the master's method with great skill in *La poesía de Vicente Aleixandre: imagen, estilo, mundo poético* (Madrid, 1950).

As far as predecessors are concerned, Dámaso Alonso feels indebted to the dissertation of Berger, *Vers rapportés*, which opened large vistas on the problem of *plurimembración*. He has, however, another co-pioneer, unknown to him, in the attempt at "exact" artistic metrical stylistics, namely Henri Morier, *Le Rhythme du vers libre symboliste, étudié chez Verhaeren, Henri de Régnier, Viélé Griffin et ses relations avec le sens*, 3 vols. (Geneva, 1944). Alonso's ideal of style investigation coincides with that of Amado Alonso and with what I call "art-minded philology" (*Yale French Studies*, Spring-Summer 1949, pp. 62-70, and outlined as early as 1929 in *Schule und Wissenschaft*, pp. 224-260).

H. H.

AMERIKANISCHE DICHTER UND DIE DEUTSCHE LITERATUR. By J. Wesley Thomas. Goslar: Volksbücherei-Verlag, 1950. 176 p.

This would be a fascinating and thought-provoking book—for such vast and condensed outlines of a very important problem are badly needed indeed—if only

it were a little more thorough, solid, and conscientious. The entire field of German influences upon America from the German Pietists of the seventeenth century to Nietzsche and Werfel is so tremendous that it simply cannot be forced into 159 pages of an octavo booklet—and the critical apparatus to be digested in preparation for such a labor is so huge that the small bibliography of less than sixty articles and books gives the barest indication of the task confronting us.

Mr. Thomas, to be sure, has presented us with a highly readable little volume, a treasure house of information and of valuable hints for which all readers will be grateful; yet it is no exaggeration to say that for once brevity was no virtue and that a bulky tome at least three times its size would have done more honor to the topic and to the scholar treating it. The brevity of statements with regard to a *poet's* indebtedness to a German work is not too bad in itself—but it becomes positively reprehensible when Mr. Thomas, in facile and general terms, speaks of the influence of German *philosophers* upon American thinkers—a few lines about Emerson and Schleiermacher, a few more about Emerson and Schelling, a short paragraph on Mark Twain and Schopenhauer, a bit more about Walt Whitman and Hegel—for when reading such sentences we have the uneasy feeling that we have barely scratched the surface and that there is much more to the problem. Mr. Thomas' knowledge of the German language is accurate and to be commended; yet his clichés are not very helpful when, with a minimum of words, he characterizes three different trends and adds, for good measure, a couple of metaphors, as in the following statement on p. 146:

"Die geistige Geschichte der letzten Jahre des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts ist die Geschichte der Wendung von Herbert Spencers versöhnender Entwicklungstheorie und Hegels optimistischer Lehre von Einheit, Wachstum und Zweck zu dem mechanistischen Materialismus von Haeckel, ist die Darstellung der mit dieser verheerenden Umwälzung verbundenen vielen Umstellungen und Wiederherstellungen. Ein leichter Nebel schob sich langsam vor das Gesicht der glänzenden Sonne, und die Lichter der menschlichen Hoffnungen wurden schwach und trübe. In dem Denken mancher ernsten jungen Amerikaner war die Zuversicht aus dem verdunkelten Antlitz des materiellen Weltalls geschwunden, um einem verderblichen Determinismus Platz zu machen."

It would have been better to be far more specific in such weighty problems and—in order to save space elsewhere—to leave out several American authors (e.g., Emily Dickinson on pp. 110-111) whose connections with German letters, as Mr. Thomas himself admits, are very doubtful indeed.

Among specific points on which I disagree with Mr. Thomas are these: I would not be willing to call Irving's *Buckthorne* "einen jämmerlichen Versuch" to imitate *Wilhelm Meister,* for it deserves a kindlier judgment; but neither would I agree to call *Spectre Bridegroom,* his imitation of Bürger's *Lenore,* "das erste Meisterwerk der jungen aufstrebenden Nation," for others had preceded it. In spite of Irving's ample indebtedness to Germany (Musäus and others), I would refrain from calling the American short story "gewissermassen ein literarischer Abkömmlung [*sic*] der deutschen Erzählung." The differences are too great. In the interesting discussion of Melville and the Faustian elements in *Moby Dick* I miss at least a brief reference to the many romantic German traits (the quest of the blue flower, as it were) in *Mardi.* In spite of Mr. Thomas' arguments about Walt Whitman's indebtedness to the German romanticists, I would hesitate to assert that he "bezeichnet das Ende einer literarischen Periode statt einen Anfang." With regard to Boker's tragedy on *Francesca da Rimini,* it seems so unlikely that he should have been inspired by Uhland's extremely fragmentary drama that Mr. Thomas will need stronger

words than "ziemlich ähnlich" and "wahrscheinlich gelesen" to prove his point. Concerning Schlegel's influence on W. D. Howells, it is erroneous to state that it made him "despise" the Italian stage, for Goldoni was, and always had been, one of his great favorites.

In view of the very real profit to be derived from the reading of this book, it would seem unnecessarily harsh to dismiss it with all these major and minor criticisms without expressing the hope that Mr. Thomas will now pick out the period most attractive to him and treat it, for our benefit, in a thoroughgoing manner. The present sketch has given him the best background imaginable for this task.

W.P.F.

FRANCE AND WORLD LITERATURE: YALE FRENCH STUDIES, No. 6. Autumn, 1950. 119 p.

The *Yale French Studies* has already become in its short period of existence one of America's most interesting publications on contemporary French literature. Its earlier issues, beginning with noteworthy studies on "Existentialism," have treated in turn "Modern Poets," "Criticism and Creation," "Literature and Ideas," and "The Modern Theatre." The sixth number, on "France and World Literature," offers a dozen articles of interest, not only to those concerned primarily with French culture and thought, but quite as substantially to students of comparative literature.

Four studies in the present issue are concerned with France and the literature of England or America. Patrick F. Quinn ("The Profundities of Edgar Poe") examines what seems to most Americans the "astonishing paradox" of Poe's being a literary figure of world importance. The questions raised by this article are of exceptional interest. One may feel that Mr. Quinn is unduly optimistic as to the amount of light shed by Marie Bonaparte's theories about Poe's "infantile oedipal experience of great intensity" and about his being a "sado-necrophile," and by Gaston Bachelard's discovery that Poe is "a poet of water," hydro-orientated and hydropolarized. Moreover, it may seem more than presumptuous to number Poe "among the great writers of the world" and even to consider "that Baudelaire's great achievement . . . was not so much *Les Fleurs du mal* as it was his Poe translations." But there still remains the indubitable fact that Poe was worshipfully admired by Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Valéry, and that among many others of the most gifted writers of modern France interest in Poe "became something very like a religious cult." It is to be hoped that Mr. Quinn is wrong in his suggestion that "this apotheosis . . . will perhaps never be definitively 'explained.'"

Margaret Gilman ("Revival and Revolution in English and French Romantic Poetry") examines probable causes behind the marked inferiority of French romantic poetry to that of England. The article points out that the term "Romantic Revolution" is applied to the French movement, while the English movement is more commonly referred to as the "Romantic Revival." Professor Gilman shows that the poets of French romanticism were cut off from their own lyrical heritage of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and that they sought models in translations of foreign poets and in their own lyric prose writers like Rousseau and Chateaubriand. French romanticism is seen as unable to break free from the strong rhetorical tradition in which it matured. Even its manifestoes and prefaces failed to consider "the great problems of poetry as poetry."

Most of all, French romanticism, while it stressed feeling, almost completely neglected the imagination, which was a major concern with the English romantics. It is not until the time of Baudelaire and the Symbolists (after the rediscovery of Villon and the Pléiade and a touch upon occultist and illuministic traditions) that French lyricism becomes comparable with that of the romantic period in England.

R. Galand ("T. S. Eliot and the Impact of Baudelaire") finds numerous points of contact between the works of the two poets and between their conceptions of art and life. The study reintroduces the still unsettled problem of Baudelaire's relation to religion and the Baudelairian belief in original sin that so impressed Eliot. The total evidence indicates that "the impact of Baudelaire" upon T. S. Eliot was very great indeed. Yet, in spite of much valid evidence, it is not entirely clear that "Eliot has really adopted, to a very great extent, Baudelaire's conception of life." For Eliot himself has observed that Baudelaire had "an imperfect, vague, romantic conception of Good" and that his "notion of beatitude certainly tended to the wishy-washy."

H. M. P. (Henri Peyre) furnishes a bright study on "English Literature Seen through French Eyes," in which he traces over the centuries the varying conventions in French reaction to English literature and English character. The article is more firmly woven than its easy tone suggests; and, though there is perhaps a little too much urbane coquetry, especially in asides on French sophistication and amativeness, these pages afford solid and informative reading. The vampirelike Englishman of Balzac ("Melmoth réconcilié"), the sadistic Englishman of Pétrus Borel and others, and the Englishman of "le vice anglais" treated in Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony* do not appear in the brief glimpses of the Britisher as seen, in terms of varying conventions, through French eyes. Professor Peyre finds Great Britain and France "spiritually and intellectually closer to each other than they have ever been" and believes that this is in significant part a result of "a keener appreciation of their respective poetry by the cultured groups in each nation."

Two articles are concerned with French literature and Germany. Stuart Atkins ("Mirages Français—French Literature in German Eyes"), adapting his title from J. M. Carré's *Les Écrivains français et le mirage allemand*, observes that "an examination of German reactions to French literature must in some measure . . . be an account of successive mirages." In less than ten pages the article provides a view over variant German attitudes towards French literature from the early twelfth century to the present day. The author notes that the "almost German spirit of metaphysical disquietude" characteristic of much contemporary French writing distresses the German intellectual of 1950, who hopes above all "to find in French authors their great cultural heritage of successful loyalty to reason." Kurt Weinberg ("Heine and French Poetry") explains Heine's "severe, mocking, and unfair judgments on French Romanticism" in the light of his false situation as an exile in Paris, and of his being an *engagé*, a poet of partisan spirit, whose voice "attained revolutionary accents unsurpassed in any literature." Such a man could have no sympathy with the passive, tearful, and sentimental side of romanticism. Thus Heine is far removed from Lamartine and Hugo and seems "astonishingly modern, and, in certain respects, even the spiritual contemporary of Sartre, Camus, Breton, Eluard, and Aragon."

French relations with Greece or with Greek subject matter are treated in two interesting articles. Henri Peyre ("What Greece Means to Modern France") offers assurance to those who love Greek culture that all is not lost,

that "the place of antiquity in modern literatures, if not in modern education, has decreased little," that in France, especially, even the Renaissance could not show such an enthusiasm for themes of Hellenic mythology, for Greek drama, thought, architecture, and sculpture as the present century. The list of borrowers, translators, and enthusiasts is proof enough: Claudel, Gide, Valéry, Giraudoux, Cocteau, Anouilh, Sartre, Thierry Maulnier, Péguy, Bergson, Thibaudet, Barrès, Maurras, Mauriac, Lacretelle, Montherlant, Giono, Michel Leiris, Raymond Queneau, Camus, Jean Jouve, Pierre Emmanuel. Greek myth, Greek mysticism, Greek spirit of revolt against the gods—all these still have the influence of fascination; but one is troubled at the probable truth of the observation that "the pessimism of the Greeks, first emphasized in Nietzsche's famous volume on tragedy, is what endears them most to our contemporaries." Frank Jones ("Scenes from the Life of Antigone") traces the history of *Antigone*, "the political play *par excellence*," as it has appeared in various forms on the stages of Europe since Goethe presented it nearly a century and a half ago. The article is another interesting tribute to the persistence of Greek influence in the modern world. Professor Jones finds this play "alone among dramatizations of political and social conflict" in that "it gives both its antagonists (Creon and Antigone) equal moral stature." In one form or another *Antigone* was presented in Europe during the troubled years of 1790, 1848, and 1944; and in Paris in 1945 one could have seen the drama of Antigone played in three separate versions: by Sophocles, by Robert Garnier, and by Jean Anouilh.

Harry Levin ("From Priam to Birotteau") develops the idea of an entry in the Goncourt Journal for 1866: "Everything goes to the people and deserts the kings, even literary themes, which descend from royal misfortunes to private misfortunes: from Priam to Birotteau." The "fatal men" of romanticism were figures in isolation, fighting the rest of the world. Already in Victorian times the hero of most contemporary novels was a hero in a merely technical sense. "Captain Dobbin and George Osborne were poor substitutes for Achilles or Tristan." The once-heroic figure of Napoleon shrank under Tolstoy's pen. Darwin's influence further reduced heroic stature, for "no man is a hero to the naturalist." The businessman is hardly an ideal protagonist, and Zola's worker and Proust's artist "pose the dilemma of twentieth-century literature." Yet there are signs of heroic aspirations in Malraux, Hemingway, and the Russian writers; and the cycle may be on the upswing. During the last century, "the world appears to have moved away from Birotteau"; but time alone will tell whether the motion is toward Priam again.

Georges May ("Valery Larbaud: Translator and Scholar") indicates the unusual importance of established French writers in introducing foreign literatures to the French public—and, especially, the influence exerted by such writers' translations from foreign authors. The most significant French "dragoman" of our own day would seem to be Valery Larbaud, who began with a translation of the *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner* in 1901, and played so important a part in revealing to France and to the world the genius of James Joyce. Among Valery Larbaud's other work in this field are his translations from Samuel Butler, Liam O'Flaherty, Edith Sitwell, Archibald MacLeish—and scattered translations from various writers of Italy, Argentina, Mexico, and Spain. In addition to the translations, Valery Larbaud's essays on a number of English, Irish, and American authors helped to introduce their works to the French reading public. His recent book, *Sous l'invocation de saint Jérôme* (1946), "sums up the fruit of almost fifty years of experience as a translator, a scholar of French and foreign literatures, and an enlightened amateur of belles-lettres."

Two other articles are not so closely related to the idea of France and world literature. Juan López-Morillas ("Ortega y Gasset: Historicism vs. Classicism") discusses the ideas on "metahistory" propounded in Ortega y Gasset's *El tema de nuestro tiempo* some years before Toynbee's exploration in the same field. In place of the classical ideas that man has a *nature* and that there is a solution timelessly valid for human life, Ortega y Gasset proposes that man has, rather, a *history* and that it is his historical *variability* which affords views of whatever "substance" may be found in him. "Man is not a thing but a drama. His life is a pure and universal event which happens to each one . . ." Ortega y Gasset urges that we avoid classical fixity and "accept 'our time' as our destiny, without nostalgia or utopian longings." Roger Shattuck ("The Doubting of Fiction") discusses what he calls "the new *genre*" of the *récit*, "a universal form better represented in French literature than in most." Early French examples cited are *Adolphe* and *Dominique*, "two reflective . . . narratives by aristocrats probing deep into their pasts." Other examples of the genre or its "blood relations" are rather varied in nature: *Robinson Crusoe, Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, Hawthorne's *The Blythedale Romance*, Thoreau's *Walden*, Gide's *L'Immoraliste* and *La Symphonie pastorale*. The *récit* "is usually told in the first person . . . [and] displays a sparseness of event and a severely limited number of characters." It "carries overtones of its use in the theatre" and makes us "conscious of being at one remove from the action." It usually "reaches no true end." It is characterized by "an obscure feeling of guilt . . . a deep-seated *gêne* which often takes the shape of a preoccupation with disease—a nearness to death and to silence."

It is clear that there is no pretension to circling the globe in this issue of studies on France and world literature. Although there is a rather wide range in details relating to other Western cultures, the main weight of the articles bears upon French literary relations with America, England, Germany, and Greece. There are no articles linking France primarily with the literatures of the Near East or the Far East, or with Slavic literatures, or even with the literatures of Italy, the Scandinavian countries, or Latin America. Students of comparative literature will hope that these rich regions will be explored in later issues of the *Yale French Studies;* for the present articles have a lively interest that whets one's appetite for more.

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